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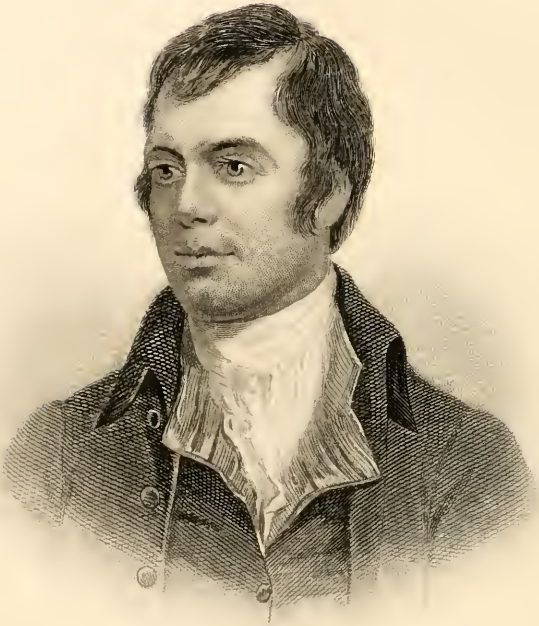

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Frontispiece.

CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS

COLLECTED AND REPUBLISHED.

(FIRST TIME, 1839; FINAL, 1869.)

CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS.

GOETHE'S PORTRAIT.[1]

[1832.]

READER! thou here beholdest the Eidolon of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. So looks and lives, now in his eighty-third year, afar in the bright little friendly circle of Weimar, "the clearest, most universal man of his time." Strange enough is the cunning that resides in the ten fingers, especially what they bring to pass by pencil and pen! Him who never saw England, England now sees: from Fraser's "Gallery" he looks forth here, wondering, doubtless, how *he* came into such a "*Lichtstrasse,* lightstreet," or galaxy; yet with kind recognition of all neighbors, even as the moon looks kindly on lesser lights, and, were they but fish-oil cressets, or terrestrial Vauxhall stars (of clipped tin), forbids not their shining. — Nay, the very soul of the man thou canst likewise behold. Do but look well in those forty volumes of "musical wisdom," which, under the title of *Goethes Werke,* Cotta of Tübingen, or Black and Young of Covent Garden, — once offer them a trifle of drink-money, — will cheerfully hand thee: greater sight, or more profitable, thou wilt not meet with in this generation.

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[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 26. — By Stieler of Munich: the copy in *Fraser's Magazine* proved a total failure and involuntary caricature, — resembling, as was said at the time, a wretched old-clothesman carrying behind his back a hat which he seemed to have stolen.

The German language, it is presumable, thou knowest; if not, shouldst thou undertake the study thereof for that sole end, it were well worth thy while.

Croquis, a man otherwise of rather satirical turn, surprises us, on this occasion, with a fit of enthusiasm. He declares often, that here is the finest of all living heads; speaks much of blended passion and repose; serene depths of eyes; the brow, the temples, royally arched, a very palace of thought; — and so forth.

The Writer of these Notices is not without decision of character, and can believe what he knows. He answers Brother Croquis, that it is no wonder the head should be royal and a palace; for a most royal work was appointed to be done therein. Reader! within that head the whole world lies mirrored, in such clear ethereal harmony as it has done in none since Shakspeare left us: even *this* rag-fair of a world, wherein thou painfully strugglest, and (as is like) stumblest, — all lies transfigured here, and revealed authentically to be still holy, still divine. What alchemy was that: to find a mad universe full of scepticism, discord, desperation; and *transmute* it into a wise universe of belief, and melody, and reverence! Was not *there* an *opus magnum*, if one ever was? This, then, is he who, heroically doing and enduring, has accomplished it.

In this distracted Time of ours, wherein men have lost their old loadstars, and wandered after night-fires and foolish will-o'-wisps; and all things, in that "shaking of the nations," have been tumbled into chaos, the high made low, and the low high; and ever and anon some duke of this, and king of that, is gurgled aloft, to float there for moments; and fancies himself the governor and head-director of it all, and *is* but the topmost froth-bell, to burst again and mingle with the wild fermenting mass: in this so despicable Time, we say, there were nevertheless (be the bounteous Heavens ever thanked for it!) *two great men* sent among us. The one, in the island of St. Helena now sleeps "dark and lone, amid the Ocean's everlasting lullaby;" the other still rejoices in the blessed sunlight, on the banks of the Ilme.

Great was the part allotted each, great the talent given him for the same; yet, mark the contrast! Bonaparte walked through the war-convulsed world like an all-devouring earthquake, heaving, thundering, hurling kingdom over kingdom; Goethe was as the mild-shining, inaudible Light, which, notwithstanding, can again make that Chaos into a Creation. Thus too, we see Napoleon, with his Austerlitzes, Waterloos and Borodinos, is quite gone; all departed, sunk to silence like a tavern-brawl. While this other! — *he* still shines with his direct radiance; his inspired words are to abide in living hearts, as the life and inspiration of thinkers, born and still unborn. Some fifty years hence, his thinking will be found translated, and ground down, even to the capacity of the diurnal press; acts of parliament will be passed in virtue of him: — this man, if we will consider of it, is appointed to be ruler of the world.

Reader! to thee thyself, even now, he has one counsel to give, the secret of his whole poetic alchemy: GEDENKE ZU LEBEN. Yes, "think of living"! Thy life, wert thou the "pitifulest of all the sons of earth," is no idle dream, but a solemn reality. It is thy own; it is all thou hast to front eternity with. Work, then, even as he has done, and does, — "LIKE A STAR, UNHASTING, YET UNRESTING." — *Sic valeas.*

DEATH OF GOETHE.[1]

[1832.]

In the Obituary of these days stands one article of quite peculiar import; the time, the place and particulars of which will have to be often repeated and re-written, and continue in remembrance many centuries: this, namely, that Johann Wolfgang von Goethe died at Weimar, on the 22d March, 1832. It was about eleven in the morning; "he expired," says the record, "without any apparent suffering, having, a few minutes previously, called for paper for the purpose of writing, and expressed his delight at the arrival of spring." A beautiful death; like that of a soldier found faithful at his post, and in the cold hand his arms still grasped! The Poet's last words are a greeting of the new-awakened Earth; his last movement is to work at his appointed task. Beautiful; what we might call a Classic sacred-death; if it were not rather an Elijah-translation, — in a chariot, not of fire and terror, but of hope and soft vernal sunbeams! It was at Frankfort-on-Mayn, on the 28th of August, 1749, that this man entered the world: and now, gently welcoming the birthday of his eighty-second spring, he closes his eyes, and takes farewell.

So, then, our Greatest has departed. That melody of life, with its cunning tones, which took captive ear and heart, has gone silent; the heavenly force that dwelt here victorious over so much, is here no longer; thus far, not farther, by speech and by act, shall the wise man utter himself forth. The End! What solemn meaning lies in that sound, as it peals mournfully through the soul, when a living friend has passed away! All now is closed, irrevocable; the changeful life-picture, growing daily into new coherence, under new touches and hues, has suddenly become completed and unchangeable; there as it lay, it is dipped, from this moment, in the ether of the heavens, and shines transfigured, to endure even so — forever. Time and Time's Empire; stern, wide-devouring, yet not without their grandeur! The week-day man, who was one of us, has put on the garment of Eternity, and become radiant and triumphant; the Present is all at once the Past: Hope is suddenly cut away, and only the backward vistas of Memory remain, shone on by a light that proceeds not from this earthly sun.

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[1] New Monthly Magazine, No. 138.

The death of Goethe, even for the many hearts that personally loved him, is not a thing to be lamented over; is to be viewed, in his own spirit, as a thing full of greatness and sacredness. For all men it is appointed once to die. To this man the full measure of a man's life had been granted, and a course and task such as to only a few in the whole generations of the world: what else could we hope or require but that now he should be called hence, and have leave to depart, having finished the work that was given him to do? If his course, as we may say of him more justly than of any other, was like the Sun's, so also was his going down. For indeed, as the material Sun is the eye and revealer of all things, so is Poetry, so is the World-Poet in a spiritual sense. Goethe's life too, if we examine it, is well represented in that emblem of a solar Day. Beautifully rose our summer sun, gorgeous in the red fervid east, scattering the spectres and sickly damps (of both of which there were enough to scatter); strong, benignant in his noonday clearness, walking triumphant through the upper realms; and now, mark also how he sets! "*So stirbt ein Held; anbetungsvoll*, So dies a hero; sight to be worshipped!"

And yet, when the inanimate material sun has sunk and disappeared, it will happen that we stand to gaze into the still-glowing west; and there rise great pale motionless clouds, like coulisses or curtains, to close the flame-theatre within; and then, in that death-pause of the Day, an unspeakable feeling will come over us: it is as if the poor sounds of Time, those hammerings of tired Labor on his anvils, those voices of simple men, had become awful and supernatural; as if in listening, we could hear them "mingle with the ever-pealing tone of old Eternity." In such moments the secrets of Life lie opener to us; mysterious things flit over the soul; Life itself seems holier, wonderful and fearful. How much more when our sunset was of a living sun; and *its* bright countenance and shining return to us, not on the morrow, but "no more again, at all, forever"! In such a scene, silence, as over the mysterious great, is for him that has some feeling thereof the fittest mood. Nevertheless by silence the distant is not brought into communion; the feeling of each is without response from the bosom of his brother. There are now, what some years ago there were not, English hearts that know something of what those three words, "Death of Goethe," mean; to such men, among their many thoughts on the event, which are not to be translated into speech, may these few, through that imperfect medium, prove acceptable.

"Death," says the Philosopher, "is a commingling of Eternity with Time; in the death of a good man, Eternity is seen looking through Time." With such a sublimity here offered to eye and heart, it is not unnatural to look with new earnestness before and behind, and ask, What space in those years and æons of computed Time, this man with his activity may influence; what relation to the world of change and mortality, which the earthly name Life, he who is even now called to the Immortals has borne and may bear.

Goethe, it is commonly said, made a New Era in Literature; a Poetic Era began with him, the end or ulterior tendencies of which are yet nowise generally visible. This common saying is a true one; and true with a far deeper meaning than, to the most, it conveys. Were the Poet but a sweet sound and singer, solacing the ear of the idle with pleasant songs; and the new Poet one who could sing his idle pleasant song to a new air, — we should account him a small matter, and his performance small. But this man, it is not unknown to many, was a Poet in such a sense as the late generations have witnessed no other; as it is, in this generation, a kind of distinction to believe in the existence of, in the possibility of. The true Poet is ever, as of old, the Seer; whose eye has been gifted to discern the godlike Mystery of God's Universe, and decipher some new lines of its celestial writing; we can still call him a *Vates* and Seer; for he *sees* into this greatest of secrets, "the open secret;" hidden things become clear; how the Future (both resting on Eternity) is but another phasis of the Present: thereby are his words in very truth prophetic; what he has spoken shall be done.

It begins now to be everywhere surmised that the real Force, which in this world all things must obey, is Insight, Spiritual Vision and Determination. The Thought is parent of the Deed, nay is living soul of it, and last and continual, as well as first mover of it; is the foundation and beginning and essence, therefore, of man's whole existence here below. In this sense, it has been said, the Word of man (the uttered Thought of man) is still a magic formula, whereby he rules the world. Do not the winds and waters, and all tumultuous powers, inanimate and animate, obey him? A poor, quite mechanical Magician speaks; and fire-winged ships cross the Ocean at his bidding. Or mark, above all, that "raging of the nations," wholly in contention, desperation and dark chaotic fury; how the meek voice of a Hebrew Martyr and Redeemer stills it into order, and a savage Earth becomes kind and beautiful, and the habitation of horrid cruelty a temple of peace. The true Sovereign of the world, who moulds the world like soft wax, according to his pleasure, is he who lovingly *sees* into the world; the "inspired Thinker," whom in these days we name Poet. The true Sovereign is the Wise Man.

However, as the Moon, which can heave up the Atlantic, sends not in her obedient billows at once, but gradually; and the Tide, which swells to-day on our shores, and washes every creek, rose in the bosom of the great Ocean (astronomers assure us) eight-and-forty hours ago; and indeed, all world-movements, by nature deep, are by nature calm, and flow and swell onwards with a certain majestic slowness: so too with the Impulse of a Great Man, and the effect he has to manifest on other men. To such a one we may grant some generation or two, before the celestial Impulse he impressed on the world will universally proclaim itself, and become (like the working of the Moon) if still not intelligible, yet palpable, to all men; some generation or two more, wherein it has to grow, and expand, and envelop all things, before it can reach its acme; and thereafter mingling with other movements and new impulses, at length cease to require a specific observation or designation. Longer or shorter such period may be, according to the nature of the Impulse itself, and of the elements it works in; according, above all, as the Impulse was intrinsically great and deep-reaching, or only wide-spread, superficial and transient. Thus, if David Hume is at this hour pontiff of the world, and rules most hearts, and guides most tongues (the hearts and tongues even of those that in vain rebel against him), there are nevertheless symptoms that his task draws towards completion; and now in the distance his successor becomes visible. On the other hand, we have seen a Napoleon, like some gunpowder force (with which sort, indeed, he chiefly worked), explode his whole virtue suddenly, and thunder himself out and silent, in a space of five-and-twenty years. While again, for a man of true greatness, working with spiritual implements, two centuries is no uncommon period; nay, on this Earth of ours, there have been men whose Impulse had not completed its development till after fifteen hundred years, and might perhaps be seen still individually subsistent after two thousand.

But, as was once written, "though our clock strikes when there is a change from hour to hour, no hammer in the Horologe of Time peals through the Universe to proclaim that there is a change from era to era." The true Beginning is oftenest unnoticed and unnoticeable. Thus do men go wrong in their reckoning; and grope hither and thither, not knowing where they are, in what course their history runs. Within this last century, for instance, with its wild doings and destroyings, what hope, grounded on miscalculation, ending in disappointment! How many world-famous victories were gained and lost, dynasties founded and subverted, revolutions accomplished, constitutions sworn to; and ever the "new era" was come, was coming, yet still it came not, but the time continued sick! Alas, all these were but spasmodic convulsions of the death-sick time: the crisis of cure and regeneration to the time was not there indicated. The real new era was when a Wise Man came into the world, with clearness of vision and greatness of soul to accomplish this old high enterprise, amid these new difficulties, yet again: A Life of Wisdom. Such a man became, by Heaven's pre-appointment, in very deed the Redeemer of the time. Did he not bear the curse of the time? He was filled full with its scepticism, bitterness, hollowness and thousand-fold contradictions, till his heart was like to break; but he subdued all this, rose victorious over this, and manifoldly by word and act showed others that come after, how to do the like. Honor to him who first "through the impassable paves a road"! Such, indeed, is the task of every great man; nay of every good man in one or the other sphere, since goodness is greatness, and the good man, high or humble, is ever a martyr and "spiritual hero that ventures forward into the gulf for our deliverance." The gulf into which this man ventured, which he tamed and rendered habitable, was the greatest and most perilous of all, wherein truly all others lie included: *The whole distracted Existence of man in an age of Unbelief.* Whoso lives, whoso with earnest mind studies to live wisely in that mad element, may yet know, perhaps too well, what an enterprise was here; and for the Chosen Man of our time who could prevail in it, have the higher reverence, and a gratitude such as belongs to no other.

How far he prevailed in it, and by what means, with what endurances and achievements, will in due season be estimated. Those volumes called *Goethe's Works* will now receive no farther addition or alteration; and the record of his whole spiritual Endeavor lies written there, — were the man or men but ready that could read it rightly! A glorious record; wherein he who would understand himself and his environment, who struggles for escape out of darkness into light as for the one thing needful, will long thankfully study. For the whole chaotic Time, what it has suffered, attained and striven after, stands imaged there; interpreted, ennobled into poetic clearness. From the passionate longings and wailings of *Werter,* spoken as from the heart of all Europe; onwards through the wild unearthly melody of *Faust,* like the spirit-song of falling worlds; to that serenely smiling wisdom of *Meisters Lehrjahre,* and the *German Hafiz,* — what an interval; and all enfolded in an ethereal music, as from unknown spheres, harmoniously uniting all! A long interval; and wide as well as long; for this was a universal man. History, Science, Art, human Activity under every aspect; the laws of Light in his *Farbenlehre;* the laws of wild Italian Life in his *Benvenuto Cellini;* — nothing escaped him; nothing that he did not look into, that he did not see into. Consider, too, the genuineness of whatsoever he did; his hearty, idiomatic way; simplicity with loftiness, and nobleness, and aerial grace! Pure works of Art, completed with an antique Grecian polish, as *Torquato Tasso,* as *Iphigenie;* Proverbs; *Xenien;* Patriarchal Sayings, which, since the Hebrew Scriptures were closed, we know not where to match; in whose homely depths lie often the materials for volumes.

To measure and estimate all this, as we said, the time is not come; a century hence will be the fitter time. He who investigates it best will find its meaning greatest, and be the readiest to acknowledge that it transcends him. Let the reader have *seen,* before he attempts to *oversee.* A poor reader, in the mean while, were he who discerned not here the authentic rudiments of that same New Era, whereof we have so often had false warning. Wondrously, the wrecks and pulverized rubbish of ancient things, institutions, religions, forgotten noblenesses, made live again by the breath of Genius, lie here in new coherence and incipient union, the spirit of Art working creative through the mass; that *chaos,* into which the eighteenth century with its wild war of hypocrites and sceptics had reduced the Past, begins here to be once more a *world.* — This, the highest that can be said of written Books, is to be said of these: there is in them a New Time, the prophecy and beginning of a New Time. The corner-stone of a new social edifice for mankind is laid there; firmly, as before, on the natural rock: far-extending traces of a ground-plan we can also see; which future centuries may go on to enlarge, to amend and work into reality. These sayings seem strange to some; nevertheless they are not empty exaggerations, but expressions, in their way, of a belief, which is not now of yesterday; perhaps when Goethe has been read and meditated for another generation, they will not seem so strange.

Precious is the new light of Knowledge which our Teacher conquers for us; yet small to the new light of Love which also we derive from him: the most important element of any man's performance is the Life he has accomplished. Under the intellectual union of man and man, which works by precept, lies a holier union of affection, working by example; the influences of which latter, mystic, deep-reaching, all-embracing, can still less be computed. For Love is ever the beginning of Knowledge, as fire is of light; and works also more in the manner of *fire*. That Goethe was a great Teacher of men means already that he was a good man; that he had himself learned; in the school of experience had striven and proved victorious. To how many hearers, languishing, nigh dead, in the airless dungeon of Unbelief (a true vacuum and nonentity), has the assurance that there was such a man, that such a man was still possible, come like tidings of great joy! He who would learn to reconcile reverence with clearness; to deny and defy what is False, yet believe and worship what is True; amid raging factions, bent on what is either altogether empty or has substance in it only for a day, which stormfully convulse and tear hither and thither a distracted expiring system of society, to adjust himself aright; and, working for the world and in the world, keep himself unspotted from the world, — let him look here. This man, we may say, became morally great, by being in his own age, what in some other ages many might have been, a genuine man. His grand excellency was this, that he was genuine. As his primary faculty, the foundation of all others, was Intellect, depth and force of Vision; so his primary virtue was Justice, was the courage to be just. A giant's strength we admired in him;

yet, strength ennobled into softest mildness; even like that "silent rock-bound strength of a world," on whose bosom, which rests on the adamant, grow flowers. The greatest of hearts was also the bravest; fearless, unwearied, peacefully invincible. A completed man: the trembling sensibility, the wild enthusiasm of a Mignon can assort with the scornful world-mockery of a Mephistopheles; and each side of many-sided life receives its due from him.

Goethe reckoned Schiller happy that he died young, in the full vigor of his days; that we could "figure him as a youth forever." To himself a different, higher destiny was appointed. Through all the changes of man's life, onwards to its extreme verge he was to go; and through them all nobly. In youth, flatterings of fortune, uninterrupted outward prosperity cannot corrupt him; a wise observer has to remark: "None but a Goethe, at the Sun of earthly happiness, can keep his phœnix-wings unsinged." — Through manhood, in the most complex relation, as poet, courtier, politician, man of business, man of speculation; in the middle of revolutions and counter-revolutions, outward and spiritual; with the world loudly for him, with the world loudly or silently against him; in all seasons and situations, he holds equally on his way. Old age itself, which is called dark and feeble, he was to render lovely: who that looked upon him there, venerable in himself, and in the world's reverence ever the clearer, the purer, but could have prayed that he too were such an old man? And did not the kind Heavens continue kind, and grant to a career so glorious the worthiest end?

Such was Goethe's Life; such has his departure been. He sleeps now beside his Schiller and his Carl August of Weimar: so had the Prince willed it, that between these two should be his own final rest. In life they were united, in death they are not divided. The unwearied Workman now rests from his labors; the fruit of these is left growing, and to grow. His earthly years have been numbered and ended: but of his Activity, for it stood rooted in the Eternal, there is no end. All that we mean by the higher Literature of Germany, which is the higher Literature of Europe, already gathers round this man, as its creator; of which grand object, dawning mysterious on a world that hoped not for it, who is there that can measure the significance and far-reaching influences? The Literature of Europe will pass away; Europe itself, the Earth itself will pass away: this little life-boat of an Earth, with its noisy crew of a Mankind, and all their troubled History, will one day have vanished; faded like a cloud-speck from the azure of the All! What, then, is man! What, then, is man! He endures but for an hour, and is crushed before the moth. Yet in the being and in the working of a faithful man is there already (as all faith, from the beginning, gives assurance) a something that pertains not to this wild death-element of Time; that triumphs over Time, and *is*, and will be, when Time shall be no more.

And now we turn back into the world, withdrawing from this new-made grave. The man whom we love lies there: but glorious, worthy; and his spirit yet lives in us with an authentic life. Could each here vow to do his little task, even as the Departed did his great one; in the manner of a true man, not for a Day, but for Eternity! To live, as he counselled and commanded, not commodiously in the Reputable, the Plausible, the Half, but resolutely in the Whole, the Good, the True:

"*Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren resolut zu leben!*"

GOETHE'S WORKS.[1]

[1832.]

It is now four years since we specially invited attention to this Book; first in an essay on the graceful little fantasy-piece of *Helena*, then in a more general one on the merits and workings of Goethe himself: since which time two important things have happened in reference to it; for the publication, advancing with successful regularity, reached its fortieth and last volume in 1830; and now, still more emphatically to conclude both this "completed, final edition," and all other editions, endeavors and attainments of one in whose hands lay so much, come tidings that the venerable man has been recalled from our earth, and of his long labors and high faithful stewardship we have had what was appointed us.

The greatest epoch in a man's life is not always his death; yet for by-standers, such as contemporaries, it is always the most noticeable. All other epochs are transition-points from one visible condition to another visible; the days of their occurrence are like any other days, from which only the clearer-sighted will distinguish them; bridges they are, over which the smooth highway runs continuous, as if no Rubicon were there. But the day in a mortal's destinies which is like no other is his death-day: here, too, is a transition, what we may call a bridge, as at other epochs; but now from the keystone onwards half the arch rests on invisibility; this is a transition out of visible Time into invisible Eternity.

Since Death, as the palpable revelation (not to be overlooked by the dullest) of the mystery of wonder and depth and fear, which everywhere from beginning to ending through its whole course and movement lies under Life, is in any case so great, — we find it not unnatural that hereby a new look of greatness, a new interest should be impressed on whatsoever has preceded it and led to it; that even towards some man, whose history did not then first become significant, the world should turn, at his departure, with a quite peculiar earnestness, and now seriously ask itself a question, perhaps never seriously asked before, What the purport and character of his presence here was; now when he has gone hence, and is not present here, and will remain absent forevermore. It is the conclusion that crowns the work; much more the irreversible conclusion wherein all is concluded: thus is there no life so mean but a death will make it memorable.

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[1] Foreign Quarterly Review, No. 19. — *Goethes Werke. Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand* (Goethe's Works. Completed, final Edition), 40 vols. Stuttgard and Tübingen, 1827–1830.

At all lykewakes, accordingly, the doings and endurances of the Departed are the theme: rude souls, rude tongues grow eloquently busy with him; a whole septuagint of beldames are striving to render, in such dialect as they have, the small bible, or apocrypha, of his existence, for the general perusal. The least famous of mankind will for once become public, and have his name printed, and read not without interest: in the Newspaper Obituaries; on some frail memorial, under which he has crept to sleep. Foolish lovesick girls know that there is one method to impress the obdurate false Lovelace, and wring his bosom; the method of drowning: foolish ruined dandies, whom the tailor will no longer trust, and the world turning on its heel is about forgetting, can recall it to attention by report of pistol; and so, in a worthless death, if in a worthless life no more, reattain the topgallant of renown, — for one day. Death is ever a sublimity and supernatural wonder, were there no other left: the last act of a most strange drama, which is not dramatic, but has now become real; wherein, miraculously, Furies, god-missioned, have in actual person risen from the abyss, and do verily dance there in that terror of all terrors, and wave their dusky-glaring torches, and shake their serpent-hair! Out of which heart-thrilling, so authentically tragic fifth-act there goes, as we said, a new meaning over all the other four; making them likewise tragic and authentic, and memorable in some measure, were they formerly the sorriest pickle-herring farce.

But above all, when a Great Man dies, then has the time come for putting us in mind that he was alive; biographies and biographic sketches, criticisms, characters, anecdotes, reminiscences, issue forth as from opened springing fountains; the world, with a passion whetted by impossibility, will yet a while retain, yet a while speak with, though only to the unanswering echoes, what it has lost without remedy: thus is the last event of life often the loudest; and real spiritual *Apparitions* (who have been named Men), as false imaginary ones are fabled to do, vanish in thunder.

For ourselves, as regards the great Goethe, if not seeking to be foremost in this natural movement, neither do we shun to mingle in it. The life and ways of such men as he, are, in all seasons, a matter profitable to contemplate, to speak of: if in this death-season, long with a sad reverence looked forward to, there has little increase of light, little change of feeling arisen for the writer, a readier attention, nay a certain expectancy, from some readers is call sufficient. Innumerable meditations and disquisitions on this subject must yet pass through the minds of men; on all sides must it be taken up, by various observers, by successive generations, and ever a new light may evolve itself: why should not this observer, on this side, set down what he partially has seen into; and the necessary process thereby be forwarded, at any rate continued?

A continental Humorist, of deep-piercing, resolute though strangely perverse faculty, whose works are as yet but sparingly if at all cited in English literature, has written a chapter, somewhat in the nondescript manner of metaphysico-rhetorical, homiletic-exegetic rhapsody, on the *Greatness of Great Men;* which topic we agree with him in reckoning one of the most pregnant. The time, indeed, is come when much that was once found visibly subsistent Without must anew be sought for Within; many a human feeling, indestructible and to man's well-being indispensable, which once manifested itself in expressive forms to the Sense, now lies hidden in the *formless* depths of the Spirit, or at best struggles out obscurely in forms become superannuated, altogether inexpressive and unrecognizable; from which paralyzed imprisoned state, often the best effort of the thinker is required, and moreover were well applied, to deliver it. For if the Present is to be the "living sum-total of the whole Past," nothing that ever lived in the Past must be let wholly die; whatsoever was done, whatsoever was said or written aforetime was done and written for our edification. In such state of imprisonment, paralysis and unrecognizable defacement, as compared with its condition in the old ages, lies this our feeling towards great men; wherein, and in the much else that belongs to it, some of the deepest human interests will be found involved. A few words from Herr Professor Teufelsdröckh, if they help to set this preliminary matter in a clearer light, may be worth translating here. Let us first remark with him, however, "how wonderful in all cases, great or little, is the importance of man to man:" —

"Deny it as he will," says Teufelsdröckh, "man reverently loves man, and daily by action evidences his belief in the divineness of man. What a more than regal mystery encircles the poorest of living souls for us! The highest is not independent of him; his suffrage has value: could the highest monarch convince himself that the humblest beggar with sincere mind despised him, no serried ranks of halberdiers and body-guards could shut out some little twinge of pain; some emanation from the low had pierced into the bosom of the high. Of a truth, men are mystically united; a mystic bond of brotherhood makes all men one.

"Thus too has that fierce false hunting after Popularity, which you often wonder at, and laugh at, a basis on something true: nay, under the other aspect, what is that wonderful spirit of Interference, were it but manifested as the paltriest scandal and tea-table backbiting, other than inversely or directly, a heartfelt indestructible sympathy of man with man? Hatred itself is but an inverse love. The philosopher's wife complained to the philosopher that certain two-legged animals without feathers spake evil of him, spitefully criticised his goings out and comings in; wherein she too failed not of her share: 'Light of my life,' answered the philosopher, 'it is their love of us, unknown to themselves, and taking a foolish shape; thank them for it, and do thou love them more wisely. Were we mere steam-engines working here under this roof-tree, they would scorn to speak of us once in a twelvemonth.' The last stage of human perversion, it has been said, is when sympathy corrupts itself into envy; and the indestructible interest we take in men's doings has become a joy over their faults and misfortunes: this is the last and lowest stage; lower than this we cannot go: the absolute petrifaction of indifference is not attainable on this side total death.

"And now," continues the Professor, "rising from these lowest tea-table regions of human communion into the higher and highest, is there not still in the world's demeanor towards Great Men, enough to make the old practice of *Hero-worship* intelligible, nay significant? Simpleton! I tell thee Hero-worship still continues; it is the only creed which never and nowhere grows or can grow obsolete. For always and everywhere this remains a true saying: *Il y a dans le cœur humain un fibre religieux.* Man always *worships* something; always he sees the Infinite shadowed forth in something finite; and indeed can and must so see it in *any* finite thing, once tempt him well to *fix* his eyes thereon. Yes, in practice, be it in theory or not, we are all Supernaturalists; and have an infinite happiness or an infinite woe not only waiting us hereafter, but looking out on us through any pitifulest present good or evil;—as, for example, on a high poetic Byron through his lameness; as on all young souls through their first lovesuit; as on older souls, still more foolishly, through many a lawsuit, paper-battle, political horse-race or ass-race. Atheism, it has been said, is impossible; and truly, if we will consider it, no Atheist denies a Divinity, but only some NAME (*Nomen, Numen*) of a Divinity: the God is still present there, working in that benighted heart, were it only as a god of darkness. Thousands of stern Sansculottes, to seek no other instance, go chanting martyr-hymns to their guillotine: these spurn at the name of a God; yet worship one (as hapless "Proselytes without the Gate") under the new pseudonym of Freedom. What indeed is all this that is called political fanaticism, revolutionary madness, force of hatred, force of love and so forth, but merely, under new designations, that same wondrous, wonder-working reflex from the Infinite, which in all times has given the Finite its empyrean or tartarean hue, thereby its blessedness or cursedness, its marketable worth or unworth?

"Remark, however, as illustrative of several things, and more to the purpose here, that man does in strict speech always remain the clearest symbol of the Divinity to man. Friend Novalis, the devoutest heart I knew, and of purest depth, has not scrupled to call man, what the Divine Man is called in Scripture, a 'Revelation in the Flesh.' 'There is but one temple in the world,' says he, 'and that is the body of man. Bending before men is a reverence done to this revelation in the flesh. We touch heaven when we lay our hand on a human body.' In which notable words a reader that meditates them may find such meaning and scientific accuracy as will surprise him.

"The ages of superstition, it appears to be sufficiently known, are behind us. To no man, were he never so heroic, are shrines any more built, and vows offered as to one having supernatural power. The sphere of the TRANSCENDENTAL cannot now, by that avenue of heroic worth, of eloquent wisdom, or by any other avenue, be so easily reached. The worth that in these days could *transcend* all estimate or survey, and lead men willingly captive into *infinite* admiration, into worship, is still waited for (with little hope) from the unseen Time. All that can be said to offer itself in that kind, at present, is some slight household devotion (*Haus-Andacht*), whereby this or the other enthusiast, privately in all quietness, can love his hero or sage without measure, and idealize, and so, in a sense, idolize him; — which practice, as man is by necessity an idol-worshipper (no offence in him *so* long as *idol* means accurately *vision*, clear *symbol*), and all wicked idolatry is but a *more* idolatrous worship, may be excusable, in certain cases praiseworthy. Be this as it will, let the curious eye gratify itself in observing how the old antediluvian feeling still, though now struggling out so imperfectly, and forced into unexpected shapes, asserts its existence in the newest man: and the Chaldeans or old Persians, with their Zerdusht, differ only in vesture and dialect from the French, with their Voltaire *étouffé sous des roses*."[1]

This, doubtless, is a wonderful phraseology, but referable, as the Professor urges, to that capacious reservoir and convenience, "the nature of the time:" "A time," says he, "when, as in some Destruction of a Roman Empire, wrecks of old things are everywhere confusedly jumbled with rudiments of new; so that, till once the mixture and amalgamation be complete, and even have long continued complete and universally apparent, no grammatical *langue d'oc* or *langue d'oui* can establish itself, but only some barbarous mixed *lingua rustica*, more like a jargon than a language, must prevail; and thus the deepest matters be either barbarously spoken of, or wholly omitted and lost sight of, which were still worse." But to let the Homily proceed: —

"Consider, at any rate," continues he elsewhere, "under how many categories, down to the most impertinent, the world inquires concerning Great Men, and never wearies striving to represent to itself their whole structure, aspect, procedure, outward and inward! Blame not the world for such minutest curiosity about its great ones: this comes of the world's old-established necessity to worship: and, indeed, whom but its great ones, that 'like celestial fire-pillars go before it on the march,' ought it to worship? Blame not even that mistaken worship of sham great ones, that are not celestial fire-pillars, but terrestrial glass-lanterns with wick and tallow, under no guidance but a stupid fatuous one; of which worship the litanies and gossip-homilies are, in some quarters of the globe, so inexpressibly uninteresting. Blame it not; pity it rather, with a certain loving respect.

"Man is never, let me assure thee, altogether a clothes-horse: under the clothes there is always a body and a soul. The Count von Bügeleisen, so idolized by our fashionable classes, is not, as the English Swift asserts, created wholly by the Tailor; but partially also by the supernatural Powers. His beautifully cut apparel, and graceful expensive tackle and environment of all kinds, are but the symbols of a beauty and gracefulness, supposed to be inherent in the Count himself; under which predicament come also our reverence for his counthood, and in good part that other notable phenomenon of his being worshipped because he *is* worshipped, of one idolater, sheep-like, running after him, because many have already run. Nay, on what other principle but this latter hast thou, O reader (if thou be not one of a thousand), read, for example, thy *Homer*, and found some real joy therein? All these things, I say, the apparel, the counthood, the existing popularity and whatever else can combine there, are symbols; — bank-notes, which, whether there be gold behind them, or only bankruptcy and empty drawers, pass current for gold. But how, now, could they so pass, if gold itself were not prized, and believed and known to be somewhere extant? Produce the actual gold visibly, and mark how, in these distrustful days, your most accredited bank-paper stagnates in the market! No Holy Alliance, though plush and gilding and genealogical parchment, to the utmost that the time yields, be hung round it, can gain for itself a dominion in the heart of any man; some thirty or forty millions of men's hearts being, on the other hand, subdued into loyal reverence by a Corsican Lieutenant of Artillery. Such is the difference between God-creation and Tailor-creation. Great is the Tailor, but not the greatest. So, too, in matters spiritual, what avails it that a man be Doctor of the Sorbonne, Doctor of Laws, of Both Laws; and can cover half a square foot in pica-type with the list of his fellowships, arranged as equilateral triangle, at the vertex an '&c.' over and above, and with the parchment of his diplomas could thatch the whole street he lives in: what avails it? The man is but an owl; of prepossessing gravity, indeed; much respected by simple neighbors; but to whose sorrowful hootings no creature hastens, eager to listen. While, again, let but some riding gauger arrive under cloud of night at a Scottish inn, and word be whispered that it is Robert Burns; in few instants all beds and truckle-beds, from garret to cellar, are left vacant, and gentle and simple, with open eyes and erect ears, are gathered together."

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[1] *Die Kleider: ihr Werden und Wirken.* Von D. Teufelsdröckh. Weissnichtwo, Stillschweign'sche Buchhandlung, 1830.

Whereby, at least, from amid this questionable *lingua*, "more like a jargon than a language," so much may have become apparent: What unspeakable importance the world attaches, has ever attached (expressing the same by all possible methods) and will ever attach, to its great men. Deep and venerable, whether looked at in the Teufelsdröckh manner or otherwise, is this love of men for great men, this their exclusive admiration of great men; a quality of vast significance, if we consider it well; for, as in its origin it reaches up into the highest and even holiest provinces of man's nature, so in his practical history it will be found to play the most surprising part. Does not, for one example, the fact of such a temper indestructibly existing in all men, point out man as an essentially governable and teachable creature, and forever refute that calumny of his being by nature insubordinate, prone to rebellion? Men seldom, or rather never for a length of time and deliberately, rebel against anything that does not deserve rebelling against. Ready, ever zealous is the obedience and devotedness they show to the great, to the really high; prostrating their whole possession and self, body, heart, soul and spirit, under the feet of whatsoever is authentically above them. Nay, in most times, it is rather a slavish devotedness to those who only seem and pretend to be above them that constitutes their fault.

But why seek special instances? Is not Love, from of old, known to be the beginning of all things? And what is admiration of the great but love of the truly lovable? The first product of love is *imitation*, that all-important peculiar gift of man, whereby Mankind is not only held socially together in the present time, but connected in like union with the past and the future; so that the attainment of the innumerable Departed can be conveyed down to the Living, and transmitted with increase to the Unborn. Now great men, in particular spiritually great men (for all men have a spirit to guide, though all have not kingdoms to govern and battles to fight), are the men universally imitated and learned of, the glass in which whole generations survey and shape themselves.

Thus is the Great Man of an age, beyond comparison, the most important phenomenon therein; all other phenomena, were they Waterloo Victories, Constitutions of the Year One, glorious revolutions, new births of the golden age in what sort you will, are small and trivial. Alas, all these pass away, and are left extinct behind, like the tar-barrels they were celebrated with; and the new-born golden age proves always to be still-born: neither is there, was there or will there be any other golden age possible, save only in this: in new increase of worth and wisdom; — that is to say, therefore, in the new arrival among us of wise and worthy men. Such arrivals are the great occurrences, though unnoticed ones; all else that can occur, in what kind soever, is but the *road,* up-hill or down-hill, rougher or smoother; nowise the *power* that will nerve us for travelling forward thereon. So little comparatively can forethought or the cunningest mechanical precontrivance do for a nation, for a world! Ever must we wait on the bounty of Time, and see what leader shall be born for us, and whither he will lead.

Thus too, in defect of great men, noted men become important: the Noted Man of an age is the emblem and living summary of the Ideal which that age has fashioned for itself: show me the noted man of an age, you show me the age that produced him. Such figures walk in the van, for great good or for great evil; if not leading, then driven and still farther misleading. The apotheosis of Beau Brummel has marred many a pretty youth; landed him not at any *goal* where oak garlands, earned by faithful labor and valor, carry men to the immortal gods; but, by a fatal inversion, at the King's Bench *gaol,* where he that has never sowed shall not any longer reap, still less any longer burn his barn, but scrape himself with potsherds among the ashes thereof, and consider with all deliberation "what he wanted, and what he wants."

To enlighten this principle of reverence for the great, to teach us reverence, and whom we are to revere and admire, should ever be a chief aim of Education (indeed it is herein that instruction properly both begins and ends); and in these late ages, perhaps more than ever, so indispensable is now our need of clear reverence, so inexpressibly poor our supply. "Clear reverence!" it was once responded to a seeker of light: "all want it, perhaps thou thyself." What wretched idols, of Leeds cloth, stuffed out with bran of one kind or other, do men either worship, or being tired of worshipping (so expensively without fruit), rend in pieces and kick out of doors, amid loud shouting and crowing, what they call "tremendous cheers," as if the feat were miraculous! In private life, as in public, delusion in this sort does its work; the blind leading the blind, both fall into the ditch.

"For, alas," cries Teufelsdröckh on this occasion, "though in susceptive hearts it is felt that a great man is unspeakably great, the specific marks of him are mournfully mistaken: thus must innumerable pilgrims journey, in toil and hope, to shrines where there is no healing. On the fairer half of the creation, above all, such error presses hard. Women are born worshippers; in their good little hearts lies the most craving relish for greatness: it is even said, each chooses her husband on the hypothesis of his being a great man — in his way. The good creatures, yet the foolish! For their choices, no insight, or next to none, being vouchsafed them, are unutterable. Yet how touching also to see, for example, Parisian ladies of quality, all rustling in silks and laces, visit the condemned-cell of a fierce Cartouche; and in silver accents, and with the looks of angels, beg locks of hair from him; as from the greatest, were it only in the profession of highwayman! Still more fatal is that other mistake, the commonest of all, whereby the devotional youth, seeking for a great man to worship, finds such within his own worthy person, and proceeds with all zeal to worship *there*. Unhappy enough: to realize, in an age of such gas-light illumination, this basest superstition of the ages of Egyptian darkness!

"Remark, however, not without emotion, that of all rituals and divine services and ordinances ever instituted for the worship of any god, this of Self-worship is the ritual most faithfully observed. Trouble enough has the Hindoo devotee, with his washings and cookings and perplexed formularies, tying him up at every function of his existence: but is it greater trouble than that of his German self-worshipping brother; is it trouble even by the devoutest Fakir, so honestly undertaken and fulfilled? I answer, No; for the German's heart is in it. The German worshipper, for whom does he work, and scheme, and struggle, and fight, at his rising up and lying down, in all times and places, but for his god only? Can he escape from that divine presence of Self; can his heart waver, or his hand wax faint in that sacred service? The Hebrew Jonah, prophet as he was, rather than take a message to Nineveh, took ship to Tarshish, hoping to hide there from his Sender; but in what ship-hull or whale's belly shall the madder German Jonah cherish hope of hiding from —Himself! Consider, too, the temples he builds, and the services of (shoulder-knotted) priests he ordains and maintains; the smoking sacrifices, thrice a day or oftener, with perhaps a psalmist or two of broken-winded laureates and literators, if such are to be had. Nor are his votive gifts wanting, of rings and jewels and gold embroideries, such as our Lady of Loretto might grow yellower to look upon. A toilsome, perpetual worship, heroically gone through: and then with what issue? Alas, with the worst. The old Egyptian leek-worshipper had, it is to be hoped, seasons of light and faith: his leek-god seems to smile on him; he is humbled, and in humility exalted, before the majesty of something, were it only that of germinative Physical Nature, seen through a germinating, not unnourishing potherb. The Self-worshipper, again, has no seasons of light, which are not of blue sulphur-light; hungry, envious pride, not humility in any sort, is the ashy fruit of his worship; his self-god growls on him with the perpetual wolf-cry, Give! Give! and your devout Byron, as the Frau Hunt, with a wise simplicity (*geistreich naiv*), once said, 'must sit sulking like a great school-boy, in pet because they have given him a plain bun and not a spiced one.'—His bun was a life-rent of God's universe, with the tasks it offered, and the tools to do them with; *à priori*, one might have fancied it could be put up with for once."

After which wondrous glimpses into the Teufelsdröckh Homily on the *Greatness of Great Men,* it may now be high time to proceed with the matter more in hand; and remark that our own much-calumniated age, so fruitful in noted men, is also not without its great. In noted men, undoubtedly enough, we surpass all ages since the creation of the world; and from two plain causes : First, that there has been a French Revolution, and that there is now pretty rapidly proceeding a European Revolution; whereby everything, as in the Term-day of a great city, when all mortals are removing, has been, so to speak, set out into the street; and many a foolish vessel of dishonor, unnoticed and worth no notice in its own dark corner, has become universally recognizable when once mounted on the summit of some furniture-wagon, and tottering there (as Committee-president, or other head-director), with what is put under it, slowly onwards to its new lodging and arrangement, itself, alas, hardly to get thither without *breakage.* Secondly, that the Printing Press, with stitched and loose leaves, has now come into full action ; and makes, as it were, a sort of universal daylight, for removal and revolution and everything else to proceed in, far more commodiously, yet also far more conspicuously. A complaint has accordingly been heard that famous men abound, that we are quite overrun with famous men: however, the remedy lies in the disease itself; crowded succession already means quick oblivion. For wagon after wagon rolls off, and either arrives or is overset; and so, in either case, the vessel of dishonor, which, at worst, we saw only in crossing some street, will afflict us no more.

Of great men, among so many millions of noted men, it is computed that in our time there have been Two; one in the practical, another in the speculative province: Napoleon Buonaparte and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In which dual number, inconsiderable as it is, our time may perhaps specially pride itself, and take precedence of many others; in particular, reckon itself the flower-time of the whole last century and half. Every age will, no doubt, have its superior man or men; but one *so* superior as to take rank among the high of all ages, this is what we call a great man; this rarely makes his appearance, such bounty of Nature and Accident must combine to produce and unfold him. Of Napoleon and his works all ends of the world have heard: for *such* a host marched not in silence through the frighted deep: few heads there are in this Planet which have not formed to themselves some featured or featureless image of him; his history has been written about, on the great scale and on the small, some millions of times, and still remains to be written: one of our highest literary problems. For such a "light-nimbus" of glory and renown encircled the man; the environment he walked in was itself so stupendous, that the eye grew dazzled, and mistook his proportions; or quite turned away from him in pain and temporary blindness. Thus even among the clear-sighted there is no unanimity about Napoleon; and only here and there does his own greatness begin to be interpreted, and accurately separated from the mere greatness of his fame and fortune.

Goethe, again, though of longer continuance in the world, and intrinsically of much more unquestionable greatness and even importance there, could not be so noted by the world: for if the explosion of powder-mines and artillery-parks naturally attracts every eye and ear; the approach of a new-created star (dawning on us, in new-created radiance, from the eternal Deeps!), though *this*, and not the artillery-parks, is to shape our destiny and *rule* the lower earth, is notable at first only to certain star-gazers and weather-prophets. Among ourselves especially, Goethe had little recognition: indeed, it was only of late that his existence, as a man and not as a mere sound, became authentically known to us; and some shadow of his high endowments and endeavors, and of the high meaning that might lie therein, arose in the general mind of England, even of intelligent England. Five years ago, to rank him with Napoleon, like him as rising unattainable beyond his class, like him and more than he of quite peculiar moment to all Europe, would have seemed a wonderful procedure; candor even, and enlightened liberality, to grant him place beside this and the other home-born ready-writer, blessed with that special privilege of "English cultivation," and able thereby to write novels, heart-captivating, heart-rending, or of enchaining interest.

Since which time, however, let us say, the progress of clearer apprehension has been rapid and satisfactory: innumerable unmusical voices have already fallen silent on this matter; for in fowls of every feather, even in the pertest choughs and thievish magpies, there dwells a singular reverence of the eagle; no Dulness is so courageous, but if you once show it any gleam of a heavenly Resplendence, it will, at lowest, shut its eyes and say nothing. So fares it here with the old-established British critic; who, indeed, in these days of ours, begins to be strangely situated; so many new things rising on his horizon, black indefinable shapes, magical or not; the old brickfield (where he kneaded insufficient marketable bricks) all stirring under his feet; preternatural, mad-making tones in the earth and air; — with all which what shall an old-established British critic and brickmaker do, but, at wisest, put his hands in his pockets, and, with the face and heart of a British mastiff, though amid dismal enough forebodings, see what it will turn to?

In the younger, more hopeful minds, again, in most minds that can be considered as in a state of growth, German literature is taking its due place: in such, and in generations of other such that are to follow them, some thankful appreciation of the greatest in German literature cannot fail; at all events this feeling that he *is* great and the greatest, whereby appreciation, and what alone is of much value, appropriation, first becomes rightly possible. To forward such on their way towards appropriating what excellence this man realized and created for them, somewhat has already been done, yet not much; much still waits to be done. The field, indeed, is large: there are Forty Volumes of the most significant Writing that has been produced for the last two centuries; there is the whole long Life and heroic Character of him who produced them; all this to expatiate over and inquire into; in both which departments the deepest thinker, and most far-sighted, may find scope enough.

Nevertheless, in these days of the ten-pound franchise, when all the world (perceiving now, like the Irish innkeeper, that "death and destruction are just coming in") will have itself represented in parliament; and the wits of so many are gone in this direction to gather wool, and must needs return more or less shorn; it were foolish to invite either young or old into great depths of thought on such a remote matter; the tendency of which is neither for the Reform Bill nor against it, but quietly *through* it and beyond it; nowise to prescribe this or that mode of *electing* members, but only to produce a few members *worth* electing. Not for many years (who knows how many!) in these harassed, hand-to-mouth circumstances, can the world's bleared eyes open themselves to study the true import of such topics; of this topic, the highest of such. As things actually stand, some quite cursory glances, and considerations close on the surface, to remind a few (unelected, unelective) parties interested, that it lies over for study, are all that can be attempted here: could we, by any method, in any measure, disclose for such the wondrous wonder-working *element* it hovers in, the *light* it is to be studied and inquired after in, what is needfulest at present were accomplished.

One class of considerations, near enough the surface, we avoid; all that partakes of an elegiac character. True enough, nothing can be *done* or suffered, but there is something to be *said*, wisely or unwisely. The departure of our Greatest contemporary Man could not be other than a great event; fitted to awaken, in all who with understanding beheld it, feelings sad, but high and sacred, of mortality and immortality, of mourning and of triumph; far lookings into the Past and into the Future, — so many changes, fearful and wonderful, of fleeting Time; glimpses too of the Eternity these rest on, which knows no change. At the present date and distance, however, all this pertains not to us; has been uttered elsewhere, or may be left for utterance there. Let us consider the Exequies as past; that the high Rogus, with its sweet-scented wood, amid the wail of music eloquent to speechless hearts, has flamed aloft, heaven-kissing, in sight of all the Greeks; and that now the ashes of the Hero are gathered into their urn, and the host has marched onwards to new victories and new toils; ever to be mindful of the dead, not to mourn for him any more. The host of the Greeks, in this case, was all thinking Europe: whether their funeral games were appropriate and worthy, we stop not to inquire; the time, in regard to such things, is empty or ill-provided, and this was what the time could conveniently do. All canonization and solemn cremation are gone by; and as yet nothing suitable, nothing that does not border upon parody, has appeared in their room. A Bentham bequeaths his remains to be lectured over in a school of anatomy; and perhaps, even in this way, finds, as chief of the Utilitarians, a really nobler funeral than any other, which the prosaic age, rich only in crapes and hollow scutcheons (of timber as of words), could have afforded him.

The matter in hand being *Goethe's Works*, and the greatest work of every man, or rather the summary and net amount of all his works, being the Life he has led, we ask, as the first question: How it went with Goethe in that matter; what was the practical basis, of want and fulfilment, of joy and sorrow, from which his spiritual productions grew forth; the characters of which they must more or less legibly bear? In which sense, those Volumes entitled by him *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, wherein his personal history, what he has thought fit to make known of it, stands delineated, will long be valuable. A noble commentary, instructive in many ways, lies opened there, and yearly increasing in worth and interest; which all readers, now when the true quality of it is ascertained, will rejoice that circumstances induced and allowed him to write: for surely if old Cellini's counsel have any propriety, it is doubly proper in this case: the autobiographic practice he recommends (of which the last century in particular has seen so many worthy and worthless examples) was never so much in place as here. "All men, of what rank soever," thus counsels the brave Benvenuto, "who have accomplished aught virtuous or virtuous-like, should, provided they be conscious of really good purposes, write down their own life; nevertheless, not put hand to so worthy an enterprise till after they have reached the age of forty." All which ukase-regulations Goethe had abundantly fulfilled, — the last as abundantly as any, for he had now reached the age of sixty-two.

"This year, 1811," says he, "distinguishes itself for me by persevering outward activity. The *Life of Philip Hackert* went to press; the papers committed to me all carefully elaborated as the case required. By this task I was once more attracted to the South: the occurrences which, at that period, had befallen me there, in Hackert's company or neighborhood, became alive in the imagination; I had cause to ask, Why this which I was doing for another should not be attempted for myself? I turned, accordingly, before completion of that volume, to my own earliest personal history; and, in truth, found here that I had delayed too long. The work should have been undertaken while my mother yet lived; thereby had I got nigher those scenes of childhood, and been, by her great strength of memory, transported into the midst of them. Now, however, must these vanished apparitions be recalled by my own help; and first, with labor, many an incitement to recollection, like a necessary magic apparatus, be devised. To represent the development of a child who had grown to be remarkable, how this exhibited itself under given circumstances, and yet how in general it could content the student of human nature and his views: such was the thing I had to do.

"In this sense, unpretendingly enough, to a work treated with anxious fidelity, I gave the name *Wahrheit und Dichtung* (Truth and Fiction); deeply convinced that man in immediate Presence, still more in remembrance, fashions and models the external world according to his own peculiarities.

"The business, as, with historical studying, and otherwise recalling of places and persons, I had much time to spend on it, busied me wheresoever I went or stood, at home and abroad, to such a degree that my actual condition became like a secondary matter; though again, on all hands, when summoned outwards by occasion, I with full force and undivided sense proved myself present."[1]

These Volumes, with what other supplementary matter has been added to them (the rather as Goethe's was a life of manifold relation, of the widest connection with important or elevated persons, not to be carelessly laid before the world, and he had the rare good fortune of arranging all things that regarded even his posthumous concernment with the existing generation, according to his own deliberate judgment), are perhaps likely to be, for a long time, our only authentic reference. By the last will of the deceased, it would seem, all his papers and effects are to lie exactly as they are, till after another twenty years.

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[1] *Werke*, xxxii. 62.

Looking now into these magically recalled scenes of childhood and manhood, the student of human nature will under all manner of shapes, from first to last, note one thing: The singularly complex Possibility offered from without, yet along with it the deep never-failing Force from within, whereby all this is conquered and realized. It was as if accident and primary endowment had conspired to produce a character on the great scale; a will is cast abroad into the widest, wildest element, and gifted also in an extreme degree to prevail over this, to fashion this to its own form: in which subordinating and self-fashioning of its circumstances a character properly consists. In external situations, it is true, in occurrences such as could be recited in the Newspapers, Goethe's existence is not more complex than other men's; outwardly rather a pacific smooth existence: but in his inward specialties and depth of faculty and temper, in his position spiritual and temporal towards the world as it was, and the world as he could have wished it, the observant eye may discern complexity, perplexity enough; an extent of data greater, perhaps, than had lain in any life-problem for some centuries. And now, as mentioned, the force for solving this was, in like manner, granted him in extraordinary measure; so that we must say, his possibilities were faithfully and with wonderful success turned into acquisitions; and this man fought the good fight, not only victorious, as all true men are, but victorious without damage, and with an ever-increasing strength for new victory, as only great and happy men are. Not wounds and loss (beyond fast-healing skin-deep wounds) has the unconquerable to suffer; only ever-enduring toil; weariness, — from which, after rest, he will rise stronger than before.

Good fortune, what the world calls good fortune, awaits him from beginning to end; but also a far deeper felicity than this. Such worldly gifts of good fortune are what we call possibilities: happy he that can rule over them; but *doubly* unhappy he that cannot. Only in virtue of good guidance does that same good fortune prove good. Wealth, health, fiery light with Proteus many-sidedness of mind, peace, honor, ✓ length of days: with all this you may make no Goethe, but only some Voltaire; with the most that was fortuitous in all this, make only some short-lived, unhappy, unprofitable Byron.

At no period of the World's History can a gifted man be born when he will not find enough to do; in no circumstances come into life but there will be contradictions for him to reconcile, difficulties which it will task his whole strength to surmount, if his whole strength suffice. Everywhere the human soul stands between a hemisphere of light and another of darkness; on the confines of two everlastingly hostile empires, Necessity and Free-will. A pious adage says, "the back is made for the burden;" we might with no less truth invert it, and say, the burden was made for the back. Nay, so perverse is the nature of man, it has in all times been found that an external allotment superior to the common was more dangerous than one inferior; thus for a hundred that can bear adversity, there is hardly one that can bear prosperity.

Of riches, in particular, as of the grossest species of prosperity, the perils are recorded by all moralists; and ever, as of old, must the sad observation from time to time occur: Easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle! Riches in a cultured community are the strangest of things; a power all-moving, yet which any the most powerless and skilless can *put* in motion; they are the *readiest* of possibilities; the readiest to become a great blessing or a great curse. "Beneath gold thrones and mountains," says Jean Paul, "who knows how many giant spirits lie entombed!" The first fruit of riches, especially for the man born rich, is to teach him faith in them, and all but hide from him that there is any other faith: thus is he trained up in the miserable eye-service of what is called Honor, Respectability; instead of a man we have but a *gigman*, — one who "always kept a gig," two-wheeled or four-wheeled. Consider, too, what this same gigmanhood issues in; consider that first and most stupendous of gigmen, Phaeton, the son of Sol, who drove the brightest of all conceivable gigs, yet with the sorrowfulest result. Alas, Phaeton was his father's heir; born to attain the highest fortune without earning it: he had *built* no sun-chariot (could not build the simplest wheelbarrow), but could and would insist on *driving* one; and so broke his own stiff neck, sent gig and horses spinning through infinite space, and set the universe on fire! — Or, to speak in more modest figures, Poverty, we may say, surrounds a man with ready-made barriers, which, if they mournfully gall and hamper, do at least prescribe for him and force on him a sort of course and goal; a safe and beaten though a circuitous course; great part of his guidance is secure against fatal error, is withdrawn from *his* control. The rich, again, has his whole life to guide, without goal or barrier, save of his own choosing; and tempted as we have seen, is too likely to guide it ill; often, instead of walking straight forward, as he might, does but, like Jeshurun, wax fat and kick; in which process, it is clear, not the adamantine circle of Necessity whereon the World is built, but only his own limb-bones must go to pieces! — Truly, in plain prose, if we bethink us what a road many a Byron and Mirabeau, especially in these latter generations, have gone, it is proof of an uncommon inward wealth in Goethe, that the outward wealth, whether of money or other happiness which Fortune offered him, did in no case exceed the power of Nature to appropriate and wholesomely assimilate; that all outward blessedness grew to inward strength, and produced only blessed effects for him. Those "gold mountains" of Jean Paul, to the giant that *can* rise above them are excellent, both fortified and speculatory, heights; and do in fact become a *throne*, where happily they have not been a *tomb*.

Goethe's childhood is throughout of riant, joyful character: kind plenty in every sense, security, affection, manifold excitement, instruction encircles him; wholly an element of sun and azure, wherein the young spirit, awakening and attaining, can on all hands richly unfold itself. A beautiful boy, of earnest, lucid, serenely deep nature, with the peaceful completeness yet infinite incessant expansiveness of a boy, has, in the fittest environment, begun to *be:* beautiful he looks and moves; rapid, gracefully prompt, like the son of Maia; wise, noble, like Latona's son: nay (as all men may *now* see) he is, in very truth, a miniature incipient World-Poet; of all heavenly figures the beautifulest we know of that can visit this lower earth. Lovely enough shine for us those young years in old Teutonic Frankfort; mirrored in the far remembrance of the Self-historian, real yet ideal, they are among our most genuine poetic Idyls. No smallest matter is too small for us, when we think *who* it was that did it or suffered it. The little long clothed urchin, mercurial enough with all his stillness, can throw a whole cargo of new-marketed crockery, piece by piece, from the balcony into the street, when once the feat is suggested to him; and comically shatters cheap delf-ware with the same right hand which tragically wrote and hurled forth the demoniac scorn of Mephistopheles, or as "right hand" of Faust, "smote the universe to ruins." Neither smile more than enough (if thou be wise) that the gray-haired all-experienced man remembers how the boy walked on the Mayn bridge, and "liked to look at the bright weathercock" on the barrier there. That foolish piece of gilt wood, there glittering sunlit, with its reflex wavering in the Mayn waters, is awakening quite another glitter in the young gifted soul: is not this foolish sunlit splendor also, now when there is an *eye* to behold it, one of Nature's doings? The eye of the young seer is here, through the paltriest chink, looking into the infinite Splendors of Nature, — where, one day, himself is to enter and dwell.

Goethe's mother appears to have been the more gifted of the parents: a woman of altogether genial character, great spiritual faculty and worth; whom the son, at an after time,

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put old family friends in mind of. It is gratifying for us that she lived to witness his maturity in works and honors; to know that the little infant she had nursed was grown to be a mighty man, the first man of his nation and time. In the father, as prosperous citizen of Frankfort, skilled in many things; improved by travel, by studies both practical and ornamental; decorated with some diplomatic title, but passing, among his books, paintings, collections and household possessions, social or intellectual, spiritual or material, a quite undiplomatic independent life, we become acquainted with a German, not country- but city-*gentleman* of the last century; a character scarcely ever familiar in our Islands; now perhaps almost obsolete among the Germans too. A positive, methodical man, sound-headed, honest-hearted, sharp-tempered; with an uncommon share of volition, among other things, so that scarcely any obstacle would turn him back, but whatsoever he could not mount over he would struggle round, and in any case *be* at the end of his journey: many or all of whose good qualities passed also over by inheritance; and, in fairer combination, on nobler objects, to the whole world's profit, were seen a second time in action.

Family incidents; house-buildings, or rebuildings; arrivals, departures; in any case, new-year's-days and birthdays, are not wanting; nor city-incidents; many-colored tumult of Frankfort fairs; Kaiser's coronations, expected and witnessed; or that glorious ceremonial of the yearly *Pfeiffergericht*, wherein the grandfather himself plays so imperial a part. World incidents too roll forth their billows into the remotest creek, and alter the current there. The Earthquake of Lisbon hurls the little Frankfort boy into wondrous depths of another sort; enunciating dark theological problems, which no theology of his will solve. Direction, instruction, in like manner, awaits him in the Great Frederic's Seven-Years War; especially in that long billeting of King's Lieutenant Comte de Thorane, with his sergeants and adjutants, with his painters and picture easels, his quick precision and decision, his "dry gallantry" and stately Spanish bearing; — though collisions with the "house-father," whose German house-stairs (though he silently endures the inevitable) were not new-built to be made a French highway of; who besides loves not the French, but the great invincible Fritz they are striving to beat down. Think, for example, of that singular congratulation on the Victory at Bergen: —

"So then, at last, after a restless Passion-week, Passion-Friday, 1759, arrived. A deep stillness announced the approaching storm. We children were forbidden to leave the house; our father had no rest, and went out. The battle began; I mounted to the top story, where the field indeed was still out of my sight, but the thunder of the cannon and the volleys of the small arms could be fully discerned. After some hours, we saw the first tokens of the battle, in a row of wagons, whereon wounded men, in all sorts of sorrowful dismemberment and gesture, were driven softly past us to the Liebfrauen-Kloster, which had been changed into a hospital. The compassion of the citizens forthwith awoke. Beer, wine, bread, money were given to such as had still power of receiving. But when, ere long, wounded and captive Germans also were noticed in that train, the pity had no limits; it seemed as if each were bent to strip himself of whatever movable thing he had, to aid his countrymen therewith in their extremity.

"The prisoners, meanwhile, were the symptoms of a battle unprosperous for the Allies. My father, in his partiality, quite certain that these would gain, had the passionate rashness to go out to meet the expected visitors; not reflecting that the beaten side would in that case have to run over him. He went first into his garden, at the Friedberg Gate, where he found all quiet and solitary; then ventured forth to the Bornheim Heath, where soon, however, various scattered outrunners and baggage-men came in sight, who took the satisfaction, as they passed, of shooting at the boundary-stones, and sent our eager wanderer the reverberated lead singing about his ears. He reckoned it wiser, therefore, to come back; and learned on some inquiry, what the sound of the firing might already have taught him, that for the French all went well, and no retreat was thought of. Arriving home full of black humor, he quite, at sight of his wounded and prisoner countrymen, lost all composure. From him also many a gift went out for the passing wagons, but only Germans were to taste of it; which arrangement, as Fate had so huddled friends and foes together, could not always be adhered to.

"Our mother, and we children, who had from the first built upon the Count's word, and so passed a tolerably quiet day, were greatly rejoiced, and our mother doubly comforted, as she that morning, on questioning the oracle of her jewel-box by the scratch of a needle, had obtained a most consolatory answer not only for the present but for the future. We wished our father a similar belief and disposition; we flattered him what we could, we entreated him to take some food, which he had forborne all day; he refused our caresses and every enjoyment, and retired to his room. Our joy, in the mean while, was not disturbed; the business was over: the King's Lieutenant, who to-day, contrary to custom, had been on horseback, at length returned; his presence at home was more needful than ever. We sprang out to meet him, kissed his hands, testified our joy. It seemed to please him greatly. 'Well!' said he, with more softness than usual, 'I am glad too for your sake, dear children.' He ordered us sweetmeats, sweet wine, everything the best, and went to his chamber, where already a mass of importuners, solicitors, petitioners, were crowded.

"We held now a dainty collation; deplored our good father, who could not participate therein, and pressed our mother to bring him down; she, however, knew better, and how uncheering such gifts would be to him. Meanwhile she had put some supper in order, and would fain have sent him up a little to his room; but such irregularity was a thing he never suffered, not in extremest cases; so the sweet gifts being once put aside, she set about entreating him to come down in his usual way. He yielded at last, unwillingly, and little did we know what mischief we were making ready. The stairs ran free through the whole house, past the door of every ante-chamber. Our father, in descending, had to pass the Count's apartments. His ante-chamber was so full of people that he had at length resolved to come out, and despatch several at once; and this happened, alas, just at the instant our father was passing down. The Count stept cheerfully out, saluted him, and said: 'You will congratulate us and yourself that this dangerous affair has gone off so happily.' — 'Not at all!' replied my father, with grim emphasis: 'I wish they had chased you to the Devil, had I myself gone too.' The Count held in for a moment, then burst forth with fury: 'You shall repent this! You shall not' —"

— Father Goethe, however, has "in the mean while quietly descended," and sat down to sup much cheerfuler than formerly; he little caring, "we little knowing, in what questionable way he had rolled the stone from his heart," and how official friends must interfere, and secret negotiations enough go on, to keep him out of military prison, and worse things that might have befallen there. On all which may we be permitted once again to make the simple reflection: What a plagued and plaguing world, with its battles and bombardments, wars and rumors of war (which sow or reap no ear of corn for any man), this is! The boy, who here watches the musket-volleys and cannon-thunders of the great Fritz, shall, as man, witness the siege of Mentz; fly with Brunswick Dukes before Dumouriez and his Sansculottes, through a country champed into one red world of mud, "like Pharaoh [for the carriage too breaks down] through the Red Sea;" and finally become involved in the universal fire-consummation of Napoleon, and by skill defend himself from hurt therein! —

The father, with occasional subsidiary private tutors, is his son's schoolmaster; a somewhat pedantic pedagogue, with ambition enough and faithful good-will, but more of rigor than of insight; who, however, works on a subject that he *cannot* spoil. Languages, to the number of six or seven, with whatsoever pertains to them; histories, syllabuses, knowledges-made-easy; not to speak of dancing, drawing, music, or, in due time, riding and fencing: all is taken in with boundless appetite and aptitude; all is but fuel, injudiciously piled and of wet quality, yet under which works an unquenchable Greek-fire that will feed itself therewith, that will one day make it *all* clear and glowing. The paternal grandmother, recollected as a "pale, thin, ever white and clean-dressed figure," provides the children many a satisfaction; and at length, on some festive night, the crowning one of a puppet-show: whereupon ensues a long course of theatrical speculatings and practisings, somewhat as delineated, for another party, in the first book of *Meister's Apprenticeship;* in which Work, indeed, especially in the earlier portion of it, some shadow of the author's personal experience and culture is more than once traceable. Thus Meister's desperate burnt-offering of his young "Poems on various Occasions," was the image of a reality which took place in Leipzig; performed desperately enough, "on the kitchen hearth, the thick smoke from which, flowing through the whole house, filled our good landlady with alarm."

Old Imperial-Freetown Frankfort is not without its notabilities, tragic or comic; in any case, impressive and didactic. The young heart is filled with boding to look into the *Judengasse* (Jew-gate), where squalid painful Hebrews are banished to scour old clothes, and in hate, and greed, and Old-Hebrew obstinacy and implacability, work out a wonderful prophetic existence, as "a people terrible from the beginning;" manages, however, to get admittance to their synagogue, and see a wedding and a circumcision. On its spike, aloft on one of the steeples, grins, for the last two hundred years, the bleached skull of a malefactor and traitor; properly, indeed, not so much a traitor, as a Radical whose Reform Bill could not be carried through. The future book-writer also, on one occasion, sees the execution of a book; how the huge printed reams rustle in the flames, are stirred up with oven-forks, and fly half-charred aloft, the sport of winds; from which half-charred leaves, diligently picked up, he pieces himself a copy together, as did many others, and with double earnestness reads it.

As little is the old Freetown deficient in notable men; all accessible to a grandson of the Schultheiss,[1] who besides is a youth like no other. Of which originals, curious enough, and long since "vanished from the sale-catalogues," take only these two specimens: —

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[1] *Schultheiss* is the title of the chief magistrate in some freetowns and republics, for instance, in Berne too. It seems to derive itself from *Shuldheissen*, and may mean the Teller of Duty, him by whom what *should* be is *hight*.

"Von Reineck, of an old-noble house; able, downright, but stiff-necked; a lean black-brown man, whom I never saw smile. The misfortune befell him that his only daughter was carried off by a friend of the family. He prosecuted his son-in-law with the most vehement suit; and as the courts, in their formality, would neither fast enough nor with force enough obey his vengeance, he fell out with them; and there arose quarrel on quarrel, process on process. He withdrew himself wholly into his house and the adjoining garden, lived in a spacious but melancholy under-room, where for many years no brush of a painter, perhaps scarcely the besom of a maid, had got admittance. Me he would willingly endure; had specially recommended me to his younger son. His oldest friends, who knew how to humor him, his men of business and agents he often had at table: and, on such occasions, he failed not to invite me. His board was well furnished, his buffet still better. His guests, however, had one torment, a large stove smoking out of many cracks. One of the most intimate ventured once to take notice of it, and ask the host whether he could stand such an inconvenience the whole winter. He answered, like a second Timon, and Heautontimorumenos: "Would to God this were the worst mischief of those that plague me!" Not till late would he be persuaded to admit daughter and grandson to his sight: the son-in-law was never more to show face before him.

"On this brave and unfortunate man my presence had a kind effect; for as he gladly spoke with me, in particular instructed me on political and state concerns, he seemed himself to feel assuaged and cheered. Accordingly, the few old friends who still kept about him, would often make use of me when they wished to soothe his indignant humor, and persuade him to any recreation. In fact he now more than once went out with us, and viewed the neighborhood again, on which, for so many years, he had not turned an eye." . . .

"Hofrath Huisgen, not a native of Frankfort; of the Reformed religion, and thus incapable of public office, of advocacy among the rest, which latter, however, as a man much trusted for juristic talent, he, under another's signature, contrived quite calmly to practise, as well in Frankfort as in the Imperial Courts, — might be about sixty when I happened to have writing-lessons along with his son, and so came into the house. His figure was large; tall without being bony, broad without corpulency. His face, deformed not only by small-pox, but wanting one of the eyes, you could not look on, for the first time, without apprehension. On his bald head he wore always a perfectly white bell-shaped cap (*Glockenmütze*) tied at top with a ribbon. His nightgowns, of calamanco or damask, were always as if new-washed. He inhabited a most cheerful suite of rooms on the groundfloor in the *Allee*, and the neatness of everything about him corresponded to it. The high order of his books, papers, maps made a pleasant impression. His son, Heinrich Sebastian, who afterwards became known by various writings on Art, promised little in his youth. Good-natured but heavy, not rude yet artless, and without wish to instruct himself, he sought rather to avoid his father, as from his mother he could get whatever he wanted. I, on the other hand, came more and more into intimacy with the master the more I knew of him. As he meddled with none but important law-cases, he had time enough to amuse and occupy himself with other things. I had not long been about him, and listened to his doctrine, till I came to observe that in respect of God and the World he stood on the opposition side. One of his pet books was *Agrippa de Vanitate Scientiarum;* this he particularly recommended me to read, and did therewith set my young brain, for a while, into considerable tumult. I, in the joy of my youth, was inclined to a sort of optimism, and with God or the Gods had now tolerably adjusted myself again; for, by a series of years, I had got to experience that there is many a balance against evil, that misfortunes are things one recovers from, that in dangers one finds deliverance, and does not always break his neck. On what men did and tried, moreover, I looked with tolerance, and found much praiseworthy which my old gentleman would nowise be content with. Nay, once, as he had been depicting me the world not a little on the crabbed side, I noticed in him that he meant still to finish with a trump-card. He shut, as in such cases his wont was, the blind left eye close; looked with the other broad out; and said, in a snuffling voice: '*Auch in Gott entdeck' ich Fehler.*'"

Of a gentler character is the reminiscence of the maternal grandfather, old Schultheiss Textor; with his gift of prophetic dreaming, "which endowment none of his descendants inherited;" with his kind, mild ways; there as he glides about in his garden, at evening, "in black-velvet cap," trimming "the finer sort of fruit-trees," with aid of those antique embroidered gloves or gauntlets, yearly handed him at the *Pfeiffergericht:* a soft, spirit-looking figure; the farthest outpost of the Past, which behind him melts into dim vapor. In Frau von Klettenberg, a religious associate of the mother's, we become acquainted with the *Schöne Seele* (Fair Saint) of *Meister;* she, at an after period, studied to convert her *Philo*, but only very partially succeeded. Let us notice also, as a token for good, how the young universal spirit takes pleasure in the workshops of handicraftsmen, and loves to understand their methods of laboring and of living: —

"My father had early accustomed me to manage little matters for him. In particular, it was often my commission to stir up the craftsmen he employed; who were too apt to loiter with him; as he wanted to have all accurately done, and finally for prompt payment to have the price moderated. I came, in this way, into almost all manner of workshops; and as it lay in my nature to shape myself into the circumstances of others, to feel every species of human existence, and with satisfaction participate therein, I spent many pleasant hours in such places; grew to understand the procedure of each, and what of joy and of sorrow, advantage or drawback, the indispensable conditions of this or that way of life brought with them. . . . The household economy of the various crafts, which took its figure and color from the occupation of each, was also silently an object of attention; and so unfolded, so confirmed itself in me the feeling of the equality, if not of all men, yet of all men's situations; existence by itself appearing as the head condition, all the rest as indifferent and accidental."

And so, amid manifold instructive influences, has the boy grown out of boyhood; when now a new figure enters on the scene, bringing far higher revelations: —

"As at last the wine was failing, one of them called the maid; but instead of her there came a maiden of uncommon, and to see her in this environment, of incredible beauty. 'What is it?' said she, after kindly giving us good-evening: 'the maid is ill and gone to bed: can I serve you?' — 'Our wine is done,' said one; 'couldst thou get us a couple of bottles over the way, it were very good of thee.' — 'Do it, Gretchen,' said another, 'it is but a cat's-leap.' — 'Surely!' said she; took a couple of empty bottles from the table, and hastened out. Her figure, when she turned away from you, was almost prettier than before. The little cap sat so neat on the little head, which a slim neck so gracefully united with back and shoulders. Everything about her seemed select; and you could follow the whole form more calmly, as attention was not now attracted and arrested by the true still eyes and lovely mouth alone."

It is at the very threshold of youth that this episode of Gretchen (Margarete, Mar-*g'ret'-kin*) occurs; the young critic of slim necks and true still eyes shall now know something of natural magic, and the importance of one mortal to another; the wild-flowing bottomless sea of human Passion, glorious in auroral light (which, alas, may become infernal lightning), unveils itself a little to him. A graceful little episode we reckon it; and Gretchen better than most first-loves: wholly an innocent, wise, dainty maiden; pure and poor, — who vanishes from us here; but, we trust, in some quiet nook of the Rhineland, became wife and mother, and was the joy and sorrow of some brave man's heart, according as it is appointed. To the boy himself it ended painfully, almost fatally, had not sickness come to his deliverance; and here too he may experience how "a shadow chases us in all manner of sunshine," and in this *What-d'ye-call-it* of Existence the tragic element is not wanting. The name of Gretchen, not her story, which had nothing in it of that guilt and terror, has been made world-famous in the Play of *Faust.* —

Leipzig University has the honor of matriculating him. The name of his "propitious mother" she may boast of, but not of the reality: alas, in these days, the University of the Universe is the only propitious mother of such; all other propitious mothers are but unpropitious superannuated dry-nurses fallen bedrid, from whom the famished nursling has to *steal* even bread and water, if he will not die; whom for most part he soon takes leave of, giving perhaps (as in Gibbon's case), for farewell thanks, some rough tweak of the nose; and rushes desperate into the wide world an orphan. The time is advancing, slower or faster, when the bedrid dry-nurse will decease, and be succeeded by a walking and stirring wet one. Goethe's employments and culture at Leipzig lay in quite other groves than the academic: he listened to the Ciceronian Ernesti with eagerness, but the life-giving word flowed not from his mouth; to the sacerdotal, eclectic-sentimental Gellert (the divinity of all tea-table moral-philosophers of both sexes); witnessed "the pure soul, the genuine will of the noble man," heard "his admonitions, warnings and entreaties, uttered in a somewhat hollow and melancholy tone;" and then the Frenchman say to it all, "*Laissez le faire; il nous forme des dupes.*" "In logic it seemed to me very strange that I must now take up those spiritual operations which from of old I had executed with the utmost convenience, and tatter them asunder, insulate and as if destroy them, that their right employment might become plain to me. Of the Thing, of the World, of God, I fancied I knew almost about as much as the Doctor himself; and he seemed to me, in more than one place, to hobble dreadfully (*gewaltig zu hapern*)."

However, he studies to some profit with the Painter Oeser; hears, one day, at the door, with horror, that there is no lesson, for news of Winkelmann's assassination have come. With the ancient Gottsched, too, he has an interview: alas, it is a young Zeus come to dethrone old Saturn, whose time in the literary heaven is nigh run; for on Olympus itself, one

Demiurgus passeth away and another cometh. Gottsched had introduced the reign of *water*, in all shapes liquid and solid, and long gloriously presided over the same; but now there is enough of it, and the "rayless majesty" (had he been prophetic) here beheld the rayed one, before whom he was to melt away: —

"We announced ourselves. The servant led us into a large room, and said his master would come immediately. Whether we misinterpreted a motion he made I cannot say; at any rate, we fancied he had beckoned us to advance into an adjoining chamber. We did advance, and to a singular scene; for, at the same moment, Gottsched, the huge broad gigantic man, entered from the opposite door, in green damask nightgown, lined with red taffeta; but his enormous head was bald and without covering. This, however, was the very want to be now supplied: for the servant came springing in at the side-door, with a full-bottomed wig on his hand (the locks fell down to his elbow), and held it out, with terrified gesture, to his master. Gottsched, without uttering the smallest complaint, lifted the head-gear with his left hand from the servant's arm; and very deftly swinging it up to its place on the head, at the same time, with his right hand, gave the poor man a box on the ear, which, as is seen in comedies, dashed him spinning out of the apartment; whereupon the respectable-looking Patriarch quite gravely desired us to be seated, and with proper dignity went through a tolerably long discourse."

In which discourse, however, it is likely, little edification for the young inquirer could lie. Already by multifarious discoursings and readings he has convinced himself, to his despair, of the watery condition of the Gottschedic world, and how "the *Noachide* (Noaheid) of Bodmer is a true symbol of the deluge that has swelled up round the German Parnassus," and in literature as in philosophy there is neither landmark nor loadstar. Here, too, he resumes his inquiries about religion, falls into "black scruples" about most things; and in "the bald and feeble deliverances" propounded him has sorry comfort. Outward things, moreover, go not as they should: the copious philosophic harlequinades of that wag, Beyrish "with a long nose," unsettle rather than settle; as do, in many ways, other wise and foolish mortals of both sexes: matters grow worse and worse. He falls sick, becomes wretched enough; yet unfolds withal "an audacious humor which feels itself superior to the moment, not only fears no danger, but even wilfully courts it." And thus, somewhat in a wrecked state, he quits his propitious mother, and returns home.

Nevertheless let there be no reflections: he must now in earnest get forward with his Law, and on to Strasburg to complete himself therein; so has the paternal judgment arranged it. A Lawyer, the thing in these latter days called Lawyer, of a man in whom ever-bounteous Nature has sent us a Poet for the World! O blind mortals, blind over what lies closest to us, what we have the truest wish to see! In this young colt that caprioles there in young lustihood, and snuffs the wind with an "audacious humor" rather dangerous-looking, no Sleswic Dobbin, to rise to dromedary stature, and draw three tons avoirdupois (of street-mud or whatever else), has been vouchsafed; but a winged miraculous Pegasus to carry us to the heavens! — Whereon too (if we consider it) many a heroic Bellerophon shall, in times coming, mount, and destroy Chimeras, and deliver afflicted nations on the lower earth.

Meanwhile, be this as it may, the youth is gone to Strasburg to prepare for the *examen rigorosum;* though, as it turned out, for quite a different than the Law one. Confusion enough is in his head and heart; poetic objects too have taken root there, and will not rest till they have worked themselves into form. "These," says he, "were Götz von Berlichingen and Faust. The written Life of the former had seized my inmost soul. The figure of a rude well-meaning self-helper, in wild anarchic time, excited my deepest sympathy. The impressive puppet-show Fable of the other sounded and hummed through me many-toned enough." — "Let us withdraw, however," subjoins he, "into the free air, to the high broad platform of the Minster; as if the time were still here, when we young ones often rendezvoused thither to salute, with full rummers, the sinking sun." They had good telescopes with them; "and one friend after another searched out the spot in the distance which had become the dearest to him; neither was I without a little eye-mark of the like, which, though it rose not conspicuous in the landscape, drew me to it beyond all else with a kindly magic." This alludes, we perceive, to that Alsatian Vicar of Wakefield, and his daughter the fair Frederike; concerning which matter a word may not be useless here. Exception has been taken by certain tender souls, of the all-for-love sort, against Goethe's conduct in that business. He flirted with his blooming blue-eyed Alsatian, she with him, innocently enough, thoughtlessly enough, till they both came to love each other; and then, when the marrying point began to grow visible in the distance, he stopt short and would no farther. Adieu, he cried, and waved his lily hand. "The good Frederike was weeping; I too was sick enough at heart." Whereupon arises the question: Is Goethe a bad man; or is he not a bad man? Alas, worthy souls! if this world were all a wedding dance, and *Thou-shalt* never came into collision with *Thou-wilt*, what a new improved time had we of it! But it is man's miserable lot, in the mean while, to eat and labor as well as wed; alas, how often, like Corporal Trim, does he spend the whole night, one moment dividing the world into two halves with his fair Beguine, next moment remembering that he has only a knapsack and fifteen florins to divide with any one! Besides, you do not consider that our dear Frederike, whom we too could weep for if it served, had a sound German heart within her stays; had furthermore abundance of *work* to do, and not even leisure to die of love; above all, that at this period, in the country parts of Alsatia, there were no circulating-library novels.

With regard to the false one's cruelty of temper, who, if we remember, saw a ghost in broad noon that day he rode away from her, let us, on the other hand, hear Jung Stilling, for he also had experience thereof at this very date. Poor Jung, a sort of German Dominie Sampson, awkward, honest, irascible, "in old-fashioned clothes and bag-wig," who had been several things, charcoal-burner, and, in repeated alternation, tailor and schoolmaster, was now come to Strasburg to study medicine; with purse long-necked, yet with head that had brains in it, and heart full of trust in God. A pious soul, who if he did afterwards write books on the Nature of Departed Spirits, also restored to sight (by his skill in eye-operations) above *two thousand poor blind persons*, without fee or reward, even supporting many of them in the hospital at his own expense.

"There dined," says he, "at this table about twenty people, whom the two comrades [Troost and I] saw one after the other enter. One especially, with large bright eyes, magnificent brow, and fine stature, walked gallantly (*muthig*) in. He drew Herr Troost's and Stilling's eyes on him; Herr Troost said, 'That must be a superior man.' Stilling assented, yet thought they would both have much vexation from him, as he looked like one of your wild fellows. This did Stilling infer from the frank style which the student had assumed; but here he was far mistaken. They found, meanwhile, that this distinguished individual was named Herr Goethe.

"Herr Troost whispered to Stilling, 'Here it were best one sat seven days silent.' Stilling felt this truth; they sat silent therefore, and no one particularly minded them, except that Goethe now and then hurled over (*herüberwälzte*) a look: he sat opposite Stilling, and had the government of the table without aiming at it.

"Herr Troost was neat, and dressed in the fashion; Stilling likewise tolerably so. He had a dark-brown coat with fustian undergarments: only that a scratch-wig also remained to him, which, among his bag-wigs, he would wear out. This he had put on one day, and came therewith to dinner. Nobody took notice of it except Herr Waldberg of Vienna. That gentleman looked at him; and as he had already heard that Stilling was greatly taken up about religion, he began, and asked him, Whether he thought Adam in Paradise had worn a scratch-wig? All laughed heartily, except Salzman, Goethe and Troost; these did not laugh. In Stilling wrath rose and burnt, and he answered: 'Be ashamed of this jest; such a trivial thing is not worth laughing at!' But Goethe struck in and added: 'Try a man first whether he deserves mockery. It is devil-like to fall upon an honest-hearted person who has injured nobody, and make sport of him!' From that time Herr Goethe took up Stilling, visited him, liked him, made friendship and brothership with him, and strove by all opportunities to do him kindness. Pity that so few are acquainted with this noble man in respect of his heart!"[1]

Here, indeed, may be the place to mention, that this noble man, in respect of his heart, and goodness and badness, is not altogether easy to get acquainted with; that innumerable persons, of the man-milliner, parish-clerk and circulating-library sort, will find him a hard nut to crack. Hear in what questionable manner, so early as the year 1773, he expresses himself towards Herr Sulzer, whose beautiful hypothesis, that "Nature meant, by the constant influx of satisfactions streaming in upon us, to fashion our minds, on the whole, to softness and sensibility," he will not leave a leg to stand on. "*On the whole,*" says he, "she does no such thing; she rather, God be thanked, hardens her genuine children against the pains and evils she incessantly prepares for them; so that we name him the happiest man who is the strongest to make front against evil, to put it aside from him, and in defiance of it go the road of his own will." "Man's art in all situations is to fortify himself against Nature, to avoid her thousand-fold ills, and only to enjoy his measure of the good; till at length he manages to include the whole circulation of his true and factitious wants in a palace, and fix as far as possible all scattered beauty and felicity within his glass walls, where accordingly he grows ever the weaker, takes to 'joys of the soul,' and his powers, roused to their natural exertion by no contradiction, melt away into" — *horresco referens* — "Virtue, Benevolence, Sensibility!" In Goethe's Writings too, we all know, the moral lesson is seldom so easily educed as one would wish. Alas, how seldom is he so direct in tendency as his own plain-spoken moralist at Plundersweilern: —

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[1] *Stillings Wanderschaft.* Berlin and Leipzig, 1778.

"Dear Christian people, one and all,
When will you cease your sinning?
Else can your comfort be but small,
Good hap scarce have beginning:
For Vice is hurtful unto man,
In Virtue lies his surest plan;"

or, to give it in the original words, the emphasis of which no foreign idiom can imitate: —

"*Die Tugend ist das hochste Gut,*
Das Laster Weh dem Menschen thut!"

In which emphatic couplet, does there not, as the critics say in other cases, lie the essence of whole volumes, such as we have read? —

Goethe's far most important relation in Strasburg was the accidental temporary one with Herder; which issued, indeed, in a more permanent, though at no time an altogether intimate one. Herder, with much to give, had always something to require; living with him seems never to have been wholly a sinecure. Goethe and he moreover were fundamentally different, not to say discordant; neither could the humor of the latter be peculiarly sweetened by his actual business in Strasburg, that of undergoing a surgical operation on "the lachrymatory duct," and, above all, an unsuccessful one: —

"He was attending the Prince of Holstein-Eutin, who labored under mental distresses, on a course of travel; and had arrived with him at Strasburg. Our society, so soon as his presence there was known, felt a strong wish to get near him; which happiness, quite unexpectedly and by chance, befell me first. I had gone to the Inn *zum Geist,* visiting I forget what stranger of rank. Just at the bottom of the stairs I came upon a man, like myself about to ascend, whom by his look I could take to be a clergyman. His powdered hair was fastened up into a round lock, the black coat also distinguished him; still more a long black-silk mantle, the end of which he had gathered together and stuck into his pocket. This in some measure surprising, yet on the whole gallant and pleasing figure, of whom I had already heard speak, left me no doubt but it was the famed Traveller; and my address soon convinced him that he was known to me. He asked my name, which could not be of any significance to him; however, my openness seemed to give pleasure, for he replied to it in friendly style, and as we stept up-stairs, forthwith showed himself ready for a lively communication. Our visit also was to the same party; and before separating I begged permission to wait upon himself, which he kindly enough accorded me. I delayed not to make repeated use of this preferment; and was the longer the more attracted towards him. He had something softish in his manner, which was fit and dignified, without strictly being bred. A round face; a fine brow; a somewhat short blunt nose; a somewhat projected, yet highly characteristic, pleasant, amiable mouth. Under black eyebrows, a pair of coal-black eyes, which failed not of their effect, though one of them was wont to be red and inflamed."

With this gifted man, by five years his senior, whose writings had already given him a name, and announced the much that lay in him, the open-hearted disciple could manifoldly communicate, learning and enduring. Ere long, under that "softish manner," there disclosed itself a "counterpulse" of causticity, of ungentle almost noisy banter; the blunt nose was too often curled in an adunco-suspensive manner. Whatsoever of self-complacency, of acquired attachment and insight, of self-sufficiency well or ill grounded, lay in the youth, was exposed, we can fancy, to the severest trial. In Herder too, as in an expressive microcosm, he might see imaged the whole wild world of German literature, of European Thought; its old workings and misworkings, its best recent tendencies and efforts; what its past and actual wasteness, perplexity, confusion worse confounded, was. In all which, moreover, the bantered, yet imperturbably inquiring brave young man had quite other than a theoretic interest, being himself minded to dwell there. It is easy to conceive that Herder's presence, stirring up in that fashion so many new and old matters, would mightily aggravate the former "fermentation;" and thereby, it is true, unintentionally or not, forward the same towards clearness.

In fact, with the hastiest glance over the then position of the world spiritual, we shall find that as Disorder is never wanting (and for the young spiritual hero, who is there only to destroy Disorder and make it Order, can least of all be wanting), so, at the present juncture, it specially abounded. Why dwell on this often-delineated Epoch? Over all Europe the reign of Earnestness had now wholly dwindled into that of Dilettantism. The voice of a certain modern "closet-logic," which called itself, and could not but call itself, Philosophy, had gone forth, saying, Let there be darkness, and there was darkness. No Divinity any longer dwelt in the world; and as men cannot do without a Divinity, a sort of terrestrial-upholstery one had been got together, and named TASTE, with medallic virtuosi and picture cognoscenti, and enlightened letter and belles-lettres men enough for priests. To which worship, with its stunted formularies and hungry results, must the earnest mind, like the hollow and shallow one, adjust itself, as best might be. To a new man, no doubt, the Earth is always new, never wholly without interest. Knowledge, were it only that of dead languages, or of dead actions, the foreign tradition of what others had acquired and done, was still to be searched after; fame might be enjoyed if procurable; above all, the culinary and brewing arts remained in pristine completeness, their results could be relished with pristine vigor. Life lumbered along, better or worse, in pitiful discontent, not yet in decisive desperation, as through a dim day of languor, sultry and sunless. Already, too, on the horizon might be seen clouds, might be heard murmurs, which by and by proved themselves of an electric character, and were to cool and clear that same sultriness in wondrous deluges.

To a man standing in the midst of German literature, and looking out thither for his highest good, the view was troubled perhaps with various peculiar perplexities. For two centuries, German literature had lain in the sere leaf. The Luther, "whose words were half battles," and such half battles as could shake and overset half Europe with their cannonading, had long since gone to sleep; and all other words were but the miserable bickering of theological camp-sutlers in quarrel over the stripping of the slain. Ulrich Hutten slept silent, in the little island of the Zurich Lake; the weary and heavy-laden had wiped the sweat from his brow, and laid him down to rest there: the valiant, fire-tempered heart, with all its woes and loves and loving indignations, mouldered, cold, forgotten; with such a pulse no new heart rose to beat. The tamer Opitzes and Flemmings of a succeeding era had, in like manner, long fallen obsolete. One unhappy generation after another of pedants, "rhizophagous," living on roots, Greek or Hebrew; of farce-writers, gallant-verse writers, journalists and other jugglers of nondescript sort, wandered in nomadic wise, whither provender was to be had; among whom, if a passionate Gunther go with some emphasis to ruin; if an illuminated Thomasius, earlier than the general herd, deny witchcraft, we are to esteem it a felicity. This too, however, has passed; and now, in manifold enigmatical signs, a new Time announces itself. Well-born Hagedorns, munificent Gleims have again rendered the character of Author honorable; the polish of correct, assiduous Rabeners and Ramlers have smoothed away the old impurities; a pious Klopstock, to the general enthusiasm, rises anew into something of seraphic music, though by methods wherein he can have no follower; the brave spirit of a Lessing pierces, in many a life-giving ray, through the dark inertness: Germany has risen to a level with Europe, is henceforth participant of all European influences; nay it is now appointed, though not yet ascertained, that Germany is to be the leader of spiritual Europe. A deep movement agitates the universal mind of Germany, though as yet no one sees towards what issue; only that heavings and eddyings, confused conflicting tendencies, work unquietly everywhere; the movement is begun and will not stop, but the course of it is yet far from ascertained. Even to the young man now looking on with such anxious intensity had this very task been allotted: To find it a course, and set it flowing thereon.

Whoever will represent this confused revolutionary condition of all things, has but to fancy how it would act on the most susceptive and comprehensive of living minds; what a

Chaos he had taken in, and was dimly struggling to body forth into a Creation. Add to which, his so confused, contradictory personal condition; appointed by a positive father to be practitioner of Law, by a still more positive mother (old Nature herself) to be practitioner of Wisdom, and Captain of spiritual Europe: we have confusion enough for him, doubts economic and doubts theologic, doubts moral and æsthetical, a whole world of confusion and doubt.

Nevertheless to the young Strasburg student the gods had given their most precious gift, which is worth all others, without which all others are worth nothing; a seeing eye and a faithful loving heart: —

> "*Er hatt' ein Auge treu und klug,*
> *Und war auch liebevoll genug,*
> *Zu schauen manches klar und rein,*
> *Und wieder alles zu machen sein;*
> *Hatt' auch eine Zunge die sich ergoss,*
> *Und leicht und fein in Worte floss;*
> *Dess thaten die Musen sich erfreun,*
> *Wollten ihn zum Meistersänger weihn.*"[1]

A mind of all-piercing vision, of sunny strength, not made to ray out darker darkness, but to bring warm sunlight, all-purifying, all-uniting. A clear, invincible mind, and "consecrated to be Master-singer" in quite another guild than that Nürnberg one.

His first literary productions fall in his twenty-third year; *Werter*, the most celebrated of these, in his twenty-fifth. Of which wonderful Book, and its now recognized character as poetic (and prophetic) utterance of the World's Despair, it is needless to repeat what has elsewhere been written. This and *Götz von Berlichingen*, which also, as a poetic looking-back into the past, was a word for the world, have produced incalculable effects; — which now indeed, however some departing echo of them may linger in the wrecks of our own Mosstrooper and Satanic Schools, do at length all happily lie behind us.

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[1] *Hans Sachsens Poetische Sendung* (*Goethes Werke*, xiii.); a beautiful piece (a very *Hans Sachs beatified*, both in character and style), which we wish there was any possibility of translating.

Some trifling incidents at Wetzlar, and the suicide of an unhappy acquaintance, were the means of "crystallizing" that wondrous perilous stuff, which the young heart oppressively held dissolved in it, into this world-famous, and as it proved world-medicative *Werter*. He had gone to Wetzlar with an eye still to Law; which now, however, was abandoned, never to be resumed. Thus did he too, "like Saul the son of Kish, go out to seek his father's asses, and instead thereof find a kingdom."

With the completion of these two Works (a completion in every sense, for they were not only emitted, but speedily also *de*mitted, and seen over, and left behind), commences what we can specially call his Life, his activity as Man. The outward particulars of it, from this point where his own Narrative ends, have been briefly summed up in these terms: —

"In 1776, the Heir-apparent of Weimar was passing through Frankfort, on which occasion, by the intervention of some friends, he waited upon Goethe. The visit must have been mutually agreeable; for a short time afterwards the young author was invited to court; apparently to contribute his assistance in various literary institutions and arrangements then proceeding or contemplated; and in pursuance of this honorable call, he accordingly settled at Weimar, with the title of *Legationsrath*, and the actual dignity of a place in the *Collegium*, or Council. The connection begun under such favorable auspices, and ever afterwards continued under the like or better, has been productive of important consequences, not only to Weimar but to all Germany. The noble purpose undertaken by the Duchess Amelia was zealously forwarded by the young Duke on his accession; under whose influence, supported and directed by his new Councillor, this inconsiderable state has gained for itself a fairer distinction than any of its larger, richer or more warlike neighbors. By degrees whatever was brightest in the genius of Germany had been gathered to this little court; a classical theatre was under the superintendence of Goethe and Schiller; here Wieland taught and sung; in the pulpit was Herder; and possessing such a four, the small town of Weimar, some five-and-twenty years ago, might challenge the proudest capital of the world to match it in intellectual wealth. Occupied so profitably to his country, and honorably to himself, Goethe continued rising in favor with his Prince; by degrees a political was added to his literary trust; in 1779 he became Privy Councillor; President in 1782; and at length after his return from Italy, where he had spent two years in varied studies and observation, he was appointed Minister; a post which he only a few years ago resigned, on his final retirement from public affairs."

Notable enough that little Weimar should, in this particular, have brought back, as it were, an old Italian Commonwealth into the nineteenth century! For the Petrarcas and Boccaccios, though reverenced as Poets, were not supposed to have lost their wits as men; but could be employed in the highest services of the state, not only as fit, but as the fittest, to discharge these. Very different with us, where Diplomatists and Governors can be picked up from the highways, or chosen in the manner of blind-man's-buff (the first figure you clutch, say rather that clutches *you*, will make a governor); and, even in extraordinary times, it is thought much if a Milton can become Latin Clerk under some Bulstrode Whitelock, and be called "one Mr. Milton." As if the poet, with his poetry, were no other than a pleasant mountebank, with faculty of a certain ground-and-lofty tumbling which would amuse; for which you must throw him a few coins, a little flattery, otherwise he would not amuse you with it. As if there were any talent whatsoever; above all, as if there were any talent of Poetry (by the consent of all ages the highest talent, and sometimes pricelessly high), the first foundation of which were not even these two things (properly but one thing): intellectual Perspicacity, with force and honesty of Will. Which two, do they not, in their simplest quite naked form, constitute the very equipment a Man of Business needs; the very implements whereby *all* business, from that of the delver and ditcher to that of the legislator and imperator, is accomplished; as in their noblest concentration they are still the moving faculty of the Artist and Prophet!

To Goethe himself this connection with Weimar opened the happiest course of life which, probably, the age he lived in could have yielded him. Moderation, yet abundance; elegance without luxury or sumptuosity: Art enough to give a heavenly firmament to his existence; Business enough to give it a solid earth. In his multifarious duties he comes in contact with all manner of men; gains experience and tolerance of all men's ways. A faculty like his, which could master the highest spiritual problems and conquer Evil Spirits in their own domain, was not likely to be foiled by such when they put on the simpler shape of material clay. The greatest of Poets is also the skilfulest of Managers: the little terrestrial Weimar trust committed to him prospers; and one sees with a sort of smile, in which may lie a deep seriousness, how the Jena Museums, University arrangements, Weimar Art-exhibitions and Palace-buildings, are guided smoothly on, by a hand which could have worthily swayed imperial sceptres. The world, could it intrust its imperial sceptres to such hands, were blessed: nay to this man, without the world's consent given or asked, a still higher function *had* been committed. But on the whole, we name his external life happy, among the happiest, in this, that a noble princely Courtesy could dwell in it, based on the worship, by speech and practice, of Truth only (for his victory, as we said above, was so complete, as almost to hide that there had been a struggle), and the worldly could praise him as the most agreeable of men, and the spiritual as the highest and clearest; but happy above all, in this, that it forwarded him, as no other could have done, in his inward life, the good or evil hap of which was alone of permanent importance.

The inward life of Goethe, onward from this epoch, lies nobly recorded in the long series of his Writings. Of these, meanwhile, the great bulk of our English world has nowise yet got to such understanding and mastery, that we could, with much hope of profit, go into a critical examination of their merits and characteristics. Such a task can stand over till the day for it arrive; be it in this generation, or the next, or after the next. What has been elsewhere already set forth suffices the present want, or needs only to be repeated and enforced; the expositor of German things must say, with judicious Zanga in the play: "First recover that, then shalt thou know more." A glance over the grand outlines of the matter, and more especially under the aspect suitable to these days, can alone be in place here.

In *Goethe's Works*, chronologically arranged, we see this above all things: A mind working itself into clearer and clearer freedom; gaining a more and more perfect dominion of its world. The pestilential fever of Scepticism runs through its stages; but happily it ends and disappears at the last stage, not in death, not in chronic malady (the commonest way), but in clearer, henceforth invulnerable health. *Werter* we called the voice of the world's despair: passionate, uncontrollable is this voice; not yet melodious and supreme, —as nevertheless we at length hear it in the wild apocalyptic *Faust:* like a death-song of departing worlds; no voice of joyful "morning stars singing together" over a Creation; but of red nigh-extinguished midnight stars, in spheral swan-melody, proclaiming, It is ended!

What follows, in the next period, we might, for want of a fitter term, call Pagan or Ethnic in character; meaning thereby an anthropomorphic character, akin to that of old Greece and Rome. *Wilhelm Meister* is of that stamp: warm, hearty, sunny human Endeavor; a free recognition of Life, in its depth, variety and majesty; as yet no Divinity recognized there. The famed *Venetian Epigrams* are of the like Old Ethnic tone: musical, joyfully strong; true, yet not the whole truth, and sometimes in their blunt realism jarring on the sense. As in this, oftener cited perhaps, by a certain class of wise men, than the due proportion demanded: —

"Why so bustleth the People and crieth? — Would find itself victual,
Children too would beget, feed on the best may be had!
Mark in thy note-books, Traveller, this, and at home go do likewise:
Farther reacheth no man, make he what stretching he will."

Doubt, reduced into Denial, now lies prostrate under foot: the fire has done its work, an old world is in ashes; but the smoke and the flame are blown away, and a sun again shines clear over the ruin, to raise therefrom a new nobler verdure and flowerage. Till at length, in the third or final period, melodious Reverence becomes triumphant; a deep all-pervading Faith, with mild voice, grave as gay, speaks forth to us in a *Meisters Wanderjahre*, in a *West-Œstlicher Divan;* in many a little *Zahme Xenie*, and true-hearted little rhyme, "which," it has been said, "for pregnancy and genial significance, except in the Hebrew Scriptures, you will nowhere match." As here, striking in almost at a venture: —

"Like as a Star,
That maketh not haste,
That taketh not rest,
Be each one fulfilling
His god-given Hest."[1]

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[1] "*Wie das Gestirn,*
Ohne Hast,
Aber ohne Rast,
Drehe sich jeder
Um die eigne Last."

So stands it in the original; hereby, however, hangs a tale: —

"A fact," says one of our fellow-laborers in this German vineyard, "has but now come to our knowledge, which we take pleasure and pride in stating. Fifteen Englishmen, entertaining that high consideration for the good Goethe, which the labors and high deserts of a long life usefully employed so richly merit from all mankind, have presented him with a highly wrought Seal, as a token of their veneration." We must pass over the description of the gift, for it would be too elaborate; suffice it to say, that amid tasteful carving and emblematic embossing enough, stood these words engraven on a gold belt, on the four sides respectively: *To the German Master: From Friends in England: 28th August:* 1831; finally, that the impression was a star encircled with a serpent-of-eternity, and this motto: *Ohne Hast Aber Ohne Rast. Fraser's Magazine* contains this account of it: —

"The following is the Letter which accompanied it: —

"'*To the Poet Goethe, on the 28th of August,* 1831.

"'Sir: —Among the friends whom this so interesting Anniversary calls round you, may we "English friends," in thought and symbolically, since personally it is impossible, present ourselves to offer you our affectionate congratulations. We hope you will do us the honor to accept this little Birthday Gift, which, as a true testimony of our feelings, may not be without value.

Or this small Couplet, which the reader, if he will, may substitute for whole horse-loads of *Essays on the Origin of Evil;* a spiritual manufacture which, in these enlightened times, ought ere now to have gone out of fashion: —

"'What shall I teach thee, the foremost thing?'
Couldst teach me off my own Shadow to spring!"

"'We said to ourselves: As it is always the highest duty and pleasure to show reverence to whom reverence is due, and our chief, perhaps our only benefactor is he who by act and word instructs us in wisdom, — so we, undersigned, feeling towards the Poet Goethe as the spiritually taught towards their spiritual teacher, are desirous to express that sentiment openly and in common; for which end we have determined to solicit his acceptance of a small English gift, proceeding from us all equally, on his approaching birthday; that so, while the venerable man still dwells among us, some memorial of the gratitude we owe him, and think the whole world owes him, may not be wanting.

"'And thus our little tribute, perhaps among the purest that men could offer to man, now stands in visible shape, and begs to be received. May it be welcome, and speak permanently of a most close relation, though wide seas flow between the parties!

"'We pray that many years may be added to a life so glorious, that all happiness may be yours, and strength given to complete your high task, even as it has hitherto proceeded, like a star, without haste, yet without rest.

"'We remain, Sir, your friends and servants,

"'FIFTEEN ENGLISHMEN.'

"The wonderful old man, to whom distant and unknown friends had paid such homage, could not but be moved at sentiments expressed in such terms. We hear that he values the token highly, and has condescended to return the following lines for answer: —

'DEN FUNFZEHN ENGLISCHEN FREUNDEN.

'*Worte, die der Dichter spricht,*
Treu, in heimischen Bezirken
Wirken gleich, doch weiss er nicht
Ob sie in die Ferne wirken.

'*Britten! habt sie aufgefasst:*
"*Thätigen Sinn, das Thun gezügelt;*
Stetig Streben ohne Hast;"
Und so wollt Ihrs denn besiegelt!

'*Weimar, d.* 28*ten August*, 1831. GOETHE.'"

And thus, as it chanced, was the poet's *last* birthday celebrated by an outward ceremony of a peculiar kind; wherein too, it is to be hoped, might lie some inward meaning and sincerity.

Or the pathetic picturesqueness of this: —

> "A rampart-breach is every Day,
> Which many mortals are storming:
> Fall in the gap who may,
> Of the slain no heap is forming.
>
> "*Eine Bresche ist jeder Tag,*
> *Die viele Menschen erstürmen;*
> *Wer da auch fallen mag,*
> *Die Todten sich niemals thürmen.*"

In such spirit, and with an eye that takes in all provinces of human Thought, Feeling and Activity, does the Poet stand forth as the true prophet of his time; victorious over its contradiction, possessor of its wealth; embodying the nobleness of the past into a new whole, into a new vital nobleness for the present and the future. Antique nobleness in all kinds, yet worn with new clearness; the spirit of it is preserved and again revealed in shape, when the former shape and vesture had become old (as vestures do), and was dead and cast forth; and we mourned as if the spirit too were gone. This, we are aware, is a high saying; applicable to no other man living, or that has lived for some two centuries; ranks Goethe, not only as the highest man of his time, but as a man of universal Time, important for all generations, — one of the landmarks in the History of Men.

Thus, from our point of view, does Goethe rise on us as the Uniter, and victorious Reconciler, of the distracted, clashing elements of the most distracted and divided age that the world has witnessed since the Introduction of the Christian Religion; to which old chaotic Era, of world-confusion and world-*re*fusion, of blackest darkness, succeeded by a dawn of light and nobler "dayspring from on high," this wondrous Era of ours is, indeed, oftenest likened. To the faithful heart let no era be a desperate one! It is ever the nature of Darkness to be followed by a new nobler Light; nay to produce such. The woes and contradictions of an Atheistic time; of a world sunk in wickedness and baseness and unbelief, wherein also physical wretchedness, the disorganization and brokenheartedness of whole classes struggling in ignorance and pain will not fail: all this, the view of all this, falls like a Sphinx-question on every new-born earnest heart, a life-and-death entanglement for every earnest heart to deliver itself from, and the world from. Of Wisdom cometh Strength: only when there is "no vision" do the people perish. But, by natural vicissitude, the age of *Persiflage* goes out, and that of earnest unconquerable Endeavor must come in: for the ashes of the old fire will not warm men anew; the new generation is too desolate to indulge in mockery, — unless, perhaps, in bitter suicidal mockery of itself! Thus after Voltaires enough have laughed and sniffed at what is false, appear some Turgots to ask what is true. Woe to the land where, in these seasons, no prophet arises; but only censors, satirists and embittered desperadoes, to make the evil worse; at best but to accelerate a consummation, which in accelerating they have aggravated! Old Europe had its Tacitus and Juvenal; but these availed not. New Europe too has had its Mirabeaus, and Byrons, and Napoleons, and innumerable red-flaming meteors, shaking pestilence from their hair; and earthquakes and deluges, and Chaos come again; but the clear Star, day's harbinger (*Phosphoros*, the bringer of *light*), had not yet been recognized.

That in Goethe there lay Force to educe reconcilement out of such contradiction as man is now born into, marks him as the Strong One of his time; the true *Earl*, though now with quite other weapons than those old steel *Jarls* were used to! Such reconcilement of contradictions, indeed, is the task of every man: the weakest reconciles somewhat; reduces old chaotic elements into new higher order; ever, according to faculty and endeavor, brings good out of evil. Consider now what faculty and endeavor must belong to the highest of such tasks, which virtually includes all others whatsoever! The thing that was given this man to reconcile (to begin reconciling and teach us how to reconcile), was the inward spiritual chaos; the centre of all other confusions, outward and inward: he was to close the Abyss out of which such manifold destruction, moral, intellectual, social, was proceeding.

The greatness of his Endowment, manifested in such a work, has long been plain to all men. That it belongs to the highest class of human endowments, entitling the wearer thereof, who so nobly used it, to the appellation, in its strictest sense, of Great Man, — is also becoming plain. A giant strength of Character is to be traced here; mild and kindly and calm, even as strength ever is. In the midst of so much spasmodic Byronism, bellowing till its windpipe is cracked, how very different looks *this* symptom of strength: "He appeared to aim at pushing away from him everything that did not hang upon his individual will." "In his own imperturbable firmness of character, he had grown into the habit of never contradicting any one. On the contrary, he listened with a friendly air to every one's opinion, and would himself elucidate and strengthen it by instances and reasons of his own. All who did not know him fancied that he thought as they did; for he was possessed of a preponderating intellect, and could transport himself into the mental state of any man, and imitate his manner of conceiving."[1] Beloved brethren, who wish to be strong! Had not the man, who could take this smooth method of it, more strength in him than any teeth-grinding, glass-eyed "lone Caloyer" you have yet fallen in with? Consider your ways; consider, first, whether you cannot do with being *weak!* If the answer still prove negative, consider, secondly, what strength actually is, and where you are to try for it. A certain strong man, of former time, fought stoutly at Lepanto; worked stoutly as Algerine slave; stoutly delivered himself from such working; with stout cheerfulness endured famine and nakedness and the world's ingratitude; and, sitting in jail, with the one arm left him, wrote our joyfulest, and all but our deepest, modern book, and named it *Don Quixote:* this was a genuine strong man. A strong man, of recent time, fights little for any good cause anywhere; works weakly as an English lord; weakly delivers himself from such working; with weak despondency endures the cackling of plucked geese at St. James's; and, sitting in sunny Italy, in his coach-and-four, at a distance of two thousand miles from them, writes, over many reams of paper, the following sentence, with variations: *Saw ever the world*

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[1] *Wilhelm Meister*, book vi.

one greater or unhappier? This was a sham strong man. Choose ye.—

Of Goethe's spiritual Endowment, looked at on the Intellectual side, we have (as indeed lies in the nature of things, for moral and intellectual are fundamentally one and the same) to pronounce a similar opinion; that it is great among the very greatest. As the first gift of all, may be discerned here utmost Clearness, all-piercing faculty of Vision; whereto, as we ever find it, all other gifts are superadded; nay, properly they are but other forms of the same gift. A nobler power of insight than this of Goethe you in vain look for, since Shakspeare passed away. In fact, there is much every way, here in particular, that these two minds have in common. Shakspeare too does not look *at* a thing, but into it, through it; so that he constructively comprehends it, can take it asunder, and put it together again; the thing melts, as it were, into light under his eye, and anew *creates* itself before him. That is to say, he is a Thinker in the highest of all senses: he is a Poet. For Goethe, as for Shakspeare, the world lies all translucent, all *fusible* we might call it, encircled with WONDER; the Natural in reality the Supernatural, for to the seer's eyes both become one. What are the *Hamlets* and *Tempests*, the *Fausts* and *Mignons*, but glimpses accorded us into this translucent, wonder-encircled world; revelations of the mystery of all mysteries, Man's Life as it actually is?

Under other secondary aspects the poetical faculty of the two will still be found cognate. Goethe is full of *figurativeness;* this grand light-giving Intellect, as all such are, is an imaginative one,—and in a quite other sense than most of our unhappy Imaginatives will imagine. Gall the Craniologist declared him to be a born *Volksredner* (popular orator), both by the figure of his brow, and what was still more decisive, because "he could not speak but a figure came." Gall saw what was high as his own nose reached,

> "High as the nose doth reach, all clear!
> What higher lies, they ask: Is it here?"

A far different figurativeness was this of Goethe than popular oratory has work for. In figures of the popular-oratory kind, Goethe, throughout his Writings at least, is nowise the most copious man known to us, though on a stricter scrutiny we may find him the richest. Of your ready-made, colored-paper metaphors, such as can be sewed or plastered on the surface, by way of giving an ornamental finish to the rag-web already woven, we speak not; there is not one such to be discovered in all his Works. But even in the use of genuine metaphors, which are not haberdashery ornament, but the genuine new vesture of new thoughts, he yields to lower men (for example to Jean Paul); that is to say, in fact, he is more master of the *common* language, and can oftener make *it* serve him. Goethe's figurativeness lies in the very centre of his being; manifests itself as the constructing of the inward elements of a thought, as the *vital* embodiment of it: such figures as those of Goethe you will look for through all modern literature, and except here and there in Shakspeare, nowhere find a trace of. Again, it is the same faculty in higher exercise, that enables the poet to construct a Character. Here too Shakspeare and Goethe, unlike innumerable others, are *vital;* their construction begins at the *heart* and flows outward as the life-streams do; fashioning the *surface,* as it were, spontaneously. Those Macbeths and Falstaffs, accordingly, these Fausts and Philinas have a verisimilitude and life that separates them from all other fictions of late ages. All others, in comparison, have more or less the nature of hollow vizards, constructed from without inwards, painted *like,* and deceptively put in motion. Many years ago on finishing our first perusal of *Wilhelm Meister,* with a very mixed sentiment in other respects, we could not but feel that here lay more insight into the elements of human nature, and a more poetically perfect combining of these, than in all the other fictitious literature of our generation.

Neither, as an additional similarity (for the great is ever like itself), let the majestic Calmness of both be omitted; their perfect tolerance for all men and all things. This too proceeds from the same source, perfect clearness of vision: he who comprehends an object cannot hate it, has already begun to love it. In respect of style, no less than of character, this calmness and graceful smooth-flowing softness is again characteristic of both; though in Goethe the quality is more complete, having been matured by far more assiduous study. Goethe's style is perhaps to be reckoned the most excellent that our modern world, in any language, can exhibit. "Even to a foreigner," says one, "it is full of character and secondary meanings; polished, yet vernacular and cordial, it sounds like the dialect of wise, antique-minded, true-hearted men: in poetry, brief, sharp, simple and expressive: in prose, perhaps still more pleasing; for it is at once concise and full, rich, clear, unpretending and melodious; and the sense, not presented in alternating flashes, piece after piece revealed and withdrawn, rises before us as in continuous dawning, and stands at last simultaneously complete, and bathed in the mellowest and ruddiest sunshine. It brings to mind what the prose of Hooker, Bacon, Milton, Browne, would have been, had they written under the good without the bad influences of that French precision, which has polished and attenuated, trimmed and impoverished all modern languages; made our meaning clear, and too often shallow as well as clear."

Finally, as Shakspeare is to be considered as the greater nature of the two, so on the other hand we must admit him to have been the less cultivated, and much the more careless. What Shakspeare *could* have done we nowhere discover. A careless mortal, open to the Universe and its influences, not caring strenuously to open himself; who, Prometheus-like, will scale Heaven (if it so must be), and is satisfied if he therewith pay the rent of his London Playhouse; who, had the Warwickshire Justice let him hunt deer unmolested, might, for many years more, have lived quiet on the green earth without such aerial journeys: an unparalleled mortal. In the great Goethe, again, we see a man through life at his utmost strain; a man who, as he says himself, "struggled toughly;" laid hold of all things, under all aspects, scientific or poetic; engaged passionately with the deepest interests of man's existence, in the most complex age of man's history. What Shakspeare's thoughts on "God, Nature, Art," would have been, especially had he lived to number fourscore years, were curious to know:

Goethe's, delivered in many-toned melody, as the apocalypse of our era, are here for us to know.

Such was the noble talent intrusted to this man; such the noble employment he made thereof. We can call him, once more, "a clear and universal man;" we can say that, in his universality, as thinker, as singer, as worker, he lived a life of antique nobleness under these new conditions; and, in so living, is alone in all Europe; the foremost, whom others are to learn from and follow. In which great act, or rather great sum-total of many acts, who shall compute what treasure of new strengthening, of faith become hope and vision, lies secured for all! The question, Can man still live in devoutness, yet without blindness or contraction; in unconquerable steadfastness for the right, yet without tumultuous exasperation against the wrong; as an antique worthy, yet with the expansion and increased endowment of a modern? is no longer a question, but has become a certainty, and ocularly visible fact.

We have looked at Goethe, as we engaged to do, "on *this* side," and with the eyes of "this generation;" that is to say, chiefly as a world-changer, and benignant spiritual revolutionist: for in our present so astonishing condition of "progress of the species," such is the category under which we must try all things, wisdom itself. And, indeed, under this aspect too, Goethe's Life and Works are doubtless of incalculable value, and worthy our most earnest study: for his Spiritual History is, as it were, the ideal emblem of all true men's in these days; the goal of Manhood, which he attained, we too in our degree have to aim at; let us mark well the road he fashioned for himself, and in the dim weltering chaos rejoice to find a paved way.

Here, moreover, another word of explanation is perhaps worth adding. We mean, in regard to the controversy agitated (as about many things pertaining to Goethe) about his Political creed and practice, Whether he was Ministerial or in Opposition? Let the political admirer of Goethe be at ease: Goethe was both, and also neither! The "rotten white-washed (*gebrechliche übertünchte*) condition of society" was plainer to few eyes than to his, sadder to few hearts than to his. Listen to the Epigrammatist at Venice: —

> "To this stithy I liken the land, the hammer its ruler,
> And the people that plate, beaten between them that writhes:
> Woe to the plate, when nothing but wilful bruises on bruises
> Hit it at random; and made, cometh no Kettle to view!"

But, alas, what is to be done?

> "No Apostle-of-Liberty much to my heart ever found I;
> License, each for himself, this was at bottom their want.
> Liberator of many! first dare to be Servant of many:
> What a business is that, wouldst thou know it, go try!"

Let the following also be recommended to all inordinate worshippers of Septennials, Triennials, Elective Franchise, and the Shameful Parts of the Constitution; and let each be a little tolerant of his neighbor's "festoon," and rejoice that he has himself found out *Freedom*, — a thing much wanted:

> "Walls I can see tumbled down, walls I see also a-building;
> Here sit prisoners, there likewise do prisoners sit:
> Is the world, then, itself a huge prison? Free only the madman,
> His chains knitting still up into some graceful festoon?"

So that, for the Poet, what remains but to leave Conservative and Destructive pulling one another's locks and ears off, as they will and can (the ulterior issue being long since indubitable enough); and, for his own part, strive day and night to forward the small suffering remnant of *Productives;* of those who, in true manful endeavor, were it under despotism or under sansculottism, create somewhat, with whom alone, in the end, does the hope of the world lie? Go thou and do likewise! Art thou *called* to politics, work therein, as this man would have done, like a real and not an imaginary workman. Understand well, meanwhile, that to no man is his political constitution "a life, but only a house wherein his life is led;" and hast thou a nobler task than such *house*-pargeting and smoke-doctoring, and pulling down of ancient rotten rat-inhabited walls, leave such to the proper craftsman; honor the higher Artist, and good-humoredly say with him: —

"All this is neither my coat nor my cake,
Why fill my hand with other men's charges?
The fishes swim at ease in the lake,
And take no thought of the barges."

Goethe's political practice, or rather no-practice, except that of self-defence, is a part of his conduct quite inseparably coherent with the rest; a thing we could recommend to universal study, that the spirit of it might be understood by all men, and by all men imitated.

Nevertheless it is nowise alone on this revolutionary or "progress-of-the-species" side that Goethe has significance; his Life and Work is no painted show but a solid reality, and may be looked at with profit on all sides, from all imaginable points of view. Perennial, as a possession forever, Goethe's History and Writings abide there; a thousand-voiced "Melody of Wisdom," which he that has ears may hear. What the experience of the most complexly situated, deep-searching, every way *far-experienced* man has yielded him of insight, lies written for all men here. He who was of compass to know and feel more than any other man, this is the record of his knowledge and feeling. "The deepest heart, the highest head to scan," was not beyond his faculty; thus, then, did he scan and interpret: let many generations listen, according to their want; let the generation which has no need of listening, and nothing new to learn there, esteem itself a happy one.

To us, meanwhile, to all that wander in darkness and seek light, as the one thing needful, be this possession reckoned among our choicest blessings and distinctions. *Colite talem virum;* learn of him, imitate, emulate him! So did *he* catch the Music of the Universe, and unfold it into clearness, and in authentic celestial tones bring it home to the hearts of men, from amid that soul-confusing Babylonish hubbub of this our new Tower-of-Babel era! For now too, as in that old time, had men said to themselves: Come, let us build a tower which shall reach to heaven; and by our steam-engines, and logic-engines, and skilful mechanism and manipulation, vanquish not only Physical Nature, but the divine Spirit of Nature, and scale the empyrean itself. Wherefore they must needs again be stricken with confusion of tongues (or of printing-presses); and *dispersed,* — to other work; wherein also, let us hope, their hammers and trowels shall better avail them. —

Of Goethe, with a feeling such as can be due to no other man, we now take farewell. *Vixit, vivit.*

ON HISTORY AGAIN.[1]

[1833.]

[The following singular Fragment on *History* forms part, as may be recognized, of the Inaugural Discourse delivered by our assiduous "D. T." at the opening of the *Society for the Diffusion of Common Honesty*. The Discourse, if one may credit the Morning Papers, "touched in the most wonderful manner, didactically, poetically, almost prophetically, on all things in this world and the next, in a strain of sustained or rather of suppressed passionate eloquence rarely witnessed in Parliament or out of it: the chief bursts were received with profound silence." — interrupted, we fear, by snuff-taking. As will be seen, it is one of the didactic passages that we introduce here. The Editor of this Magazine is responsible for its accuracy, and publishes, if not with leave given, then with leave taken. — O. Y.]

. . . History recommends itself as the most profitable of all studies: and truly, for such a being as Man, who is born, and has to learn and work, and then after a measured term of years to depart, leaving descendants and performances, and so, in all ways, to vindicate himself as vital portion of a Mankind, no study could be fitter. History is the Letter of Instructions, which the old generations write and posthumously transmit to the new; nay it may be called, more generally still, the Message, verbal or written, which all Mankind delivers to every man; it is the only *articulate* communication (when the inarticulate and mute, intelligible or not, lie round us and in us, so strangely through every fibre of our being, every step of our activity) which the Past can have with the Present, the Distant with what is Here. All Books, therefore, were they but Song-books or treatises on Mathematics, are in the long-run historical documents — as indeed all Speech itself is: thus we might say, History is not only the fittest study, but the only study, and includes all others whatsoever. The Perfect in History, he who understood, and saw and knew within himself, *all* that the whole Family of Adam had hitherto *been* and hitherto *done*, were perfect in all learning extant or possible; needed not thenceforth to *study* any more; had thenceforth nothing left but to *be* and to *do* something himself, that others might make History of it, and learn of *him*.

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[1] Fraser's Magazine, No. 41.

Perfection in any kind is well known not to be the lot of man: but of all supernatural perfect-characters this of the Perfect in History (so easily conceivable, too) were perhaps the most miraculous. Clearly a faultless monster which the world is not to see, not even on paper. Had the Wandering Jew indeed, begun to wander at Eden, and with a Fortunatus's Hat on his head! Nanac Shah too, we remember, steeped himself three days in some sacred Well; and there learnt all things: Nanac's was a far easier method; but unhappily not practicable — in this climate. Consider, however, at what immeasurable distance from this perfect Nanac your highest imperfect Gibbons play their part! Were there no brave men, thinkest thou, before Agamemnon? Beyond the Thracian Bosphorus, was all dead and void; from Cape Horn to Nova Zembla, round the whole habitable Globe, not a mouse stirring? Or, again, in reference to Time: — the Creation of the World is indeed old, compare it to the Year One; yet young, of yesterday, compare it to Eternity! Alas, all Universal History is but a sort of Parish History; which the "P. P. Clerk of this Parish," member of "our Alehouse Club" (instituted for what "Psalmody" is in request there) puts together, — in such sort as his fellow-members will praise. Of the *thing* now gone silent, named Past, which was once Present, and loud enough, how much do we know? Our "Letter of Instructions" comes to us in the saddest state; falsified, blotted out, torn, lost and but a shred of it in existence; this too so difficult to read or spell.

Unspeakably precious meanwhile is our shred of a Letter, is our written or spoken Message, such as we have it. Only he who understands what has been, can know what should be and will be. It is of the last importance that the individual have ascertained his relation to the whole; "an individual helps not," it has been written; "only he who unites with many at the proper hour." How easy, in a sense, for your all-instructed Nanac to work without waste or force (or what we call fault); and, in practice, act new History, as perfectly as, in theory, he knew the old! Comprehending what the given world was, what it had and what it wanted, how might his clear effort strike in at the right time and the right point; wholly increasing the true current and tendency, nowhere cancelling itself in opposition thereto! Unhappily, such smooth-running, ever-accelerated course is nowise the one appointed us; cross-currents we have, perplexed back-floods; innumerable efforts (every new man is a new effort) consume themselves in aimless eddies: thus is the River of Existence so wild-flowing, wasteful; and whole multitudes, and whole generations, in painful unreason, spend and are spent on what can never profit. Of all which, does not one-half originate in this which we have named want of Perfection in History; — the other half, indeed, in another want still deeper, still more irremediable?

Here, however, let us grant that Nature, in regard to such historic want, is nowise blamable: taking up the other face of the matter, let us rather admire the pains she has been at, the truly magnificent provision she has made, that this same Message of Instructions might reach us in boundless plenitude. Endowments, faculties enough, we have: it is her wise will too that no faculty imparted to us shall rust from disuse; the miraculous faculty of Speech, once given, becomes not more a gift than a necessity; the Tongue, with or without much meaning, will keep in motion; and only in some La Trappe by unspeakable self-restraint forbear wagging. As little can the fingers that have learned the miracle of Writing lie idle; if there is a rage of speaking, we know also there is a rage of writing, perhaps the more furious of the two. It is said, "so eager are men to speak, they will not let one another get to speech;" but, on the other hand, writing is usually transacted in private, and every man has his own desk and inkstand, and sits independent and unrestrainable there. Lastly, multiply this power of the Pen some ten-thousand-fold: that is to say, invent the Printing Press, with its Printer's Devils, with its Editors, Contributors, Booksellers, Billstickers, and see what it will do! Such are the means wherewith Nature, and Art the daughter of Nature, have equipped their favorite Man, for publishing himself to man.

Consider, now, two things: first, that one Tongue, of average velocity, will publish at the rate of a thick octavo volume per day; and then how many nimble enough Tongues may be supposed to be at work on this Planet Earth, in this City London, at this hour! Secondly, that a Literary Contributor, if in good heart and urged by hunger, will many times, as we are credibly informed, accomplish his two Magazine sheets within the four-and-twenty hours; such Contributors being now numerable not by the thousand, but by the million. Nay, taking History, in its narrower, vulgar sense, as the mere chronicle of "occurrences," of things that can be, as we say, "narrated," our calculation is still but a little altered. Simple Narrative, it will be observed, is the grand staple of Speech; "the common man," says Jean Paul, "is copious in Narrative, exiguous in Reflection; only with the cultivated man is it otherwise, reverse-wise." Allow even the thousandth part of human publishing for the emission of Thought, though perhaps the millionth were enough, we have still the nine hundred and ninety-nine employed in History proper, in relating occurrences, or conjecturing probabilities of such; that is to say, either in History or Prophecy, which is a new form of History: — and so the reader can judge with what abundance this life-breath of the human intellect is furnished in our world; whether Nature has been stingy to him or munificent. Courage, reader! Never can the historical inquirer want pabulum, better or worse: are there not forty-eight longitudinal feet of small-printed History in thy Daily Newspaper?

The truth is, if Universal History is such a miserable defective "shred" as we have named it, the fault lies not in our historic organs, but wholly in our misuse of these; say rather, in so many wants and obstructions, varying with the various age, that pervert our right use of them; especially two wants that press heavily in all ages: want of Honesty, want of Understanding. If the thing published is not true, is only a supposition, or even a wilful invention, what can be done with it, except abolish it and annihilate it? But again, Truth, says Horne Tooke, means simply the thing *trowed*, the thing believed; and now, from this to the thing *itself*, what a new fatal deduction have we to suffer! Without Understanding, Belief itself will profit little: and how can your publishing avail, when there was no vision in it, but mere blindness? For as in political appointments, the man you appoint is not he who was ablest to discharge the duty, but only he who was ablest to be appointed; so too, in all historic elections and selections, the maddest work goes on. The event worthiest to be known is perhaps of all others the least spoken of: nay, some say, it lies in the very nature of such events to be so. Thus, in those same forty-eight longitudinal feet of History, or even when they have stretched out into forty-eight longitudinal miles, of the like quality, there may not be the forty-eighth part of a hair's-breadth that will turn to anything. Truly, in these times, the quantity of printed Publication that will need to be consumed with fire, before the smallest permanent advantage can be drawn from it, might fill us with astonishment, almost with apprehension. Where, alas, is the intrepid Herculean Dr. Wagtail, that will reduce all these paper-mountains into tinder, and extract therefrom the three drops of Tinder-water Elixir?

For indeed, looking at the activity of the historic Pen and Press through this last half-century, and what bulk of History it yields for that period alone, and how it is henceforth like to increase in decimal or vigesimal geometric progression,—one might feel as if a day were not distant, when perceiving that the whole Earth would not now contain those writings of what was done in the Earth, the human memory must needs sink confounded, and cease remembering! — To some the reflection may be new and consolatory, that this state of ours is not so unexampled as it seems; that with memory and things memorable the case was always intrinsically similar. The Life of Nero occupies some diamond pages of our Tacitus: but in the parchment and papyrus archives of Nero's generation how many did it fill? The author of the *Vie de Sénèque*, at this distance, picking up a few residuary snips, has with ease made two octavos of it. On the other hand, were the contents of the then extant Roman memories, or, going to the utmost length, were all that was then *spoken* on it, put in types, how many "longitudinal feet" of small-pica had we, — in belts that would go round the Globe!

History, then, before it can become Universal History, needs of all things to be compressed. Were there no epitomizing of History, one could not remember beyond a week. Nay, go to that with it, and exclude compression altogether, we could not remember an hour, or at all: for Time, like Space, is *infinitely* divisible; and an hour with its events, with its sensations and emotions, might be diffused to such expansion as should cover the whole field of memory, and push all else over the limits. Habit, however, and the natural constitution of man, do themselves prescribe serviceable rules for remembering; and keep at a safe distance from us all such fantastic possibilities; — into which only some foolish Mahometan Caliph, ducking his head in a bucket of enchanted water, and so beating out one wet minute into seven long years of servitude and hardship, could fall. The rudest peasant has his complete set of Annual Registers legibly printed in his brain; and, without the smallest training in Mnemonics, the proper pauses, subdivisions and subordinations of the little to the great, all introduced there. Memory and Oblivion, like Day and Night, and indeed like all other Contradictions in this strange dualistic Life of ours, are necessary for each other's existence: Oblivion is the dark page, whereon Memory writes her light-beam characters, and makes them legible; were it all light, nothing could be read there, any more than if it were all darkness.

As with man and these autobiographic Annual-Registers of his, so goes it with Mankind and its Universal History, which also is *its* Autobiography: a like unconscious talent of remembering and of forgetting again does the work here. The transactions of the day, were they never so noisy, cannot remain loud forever; the morrow comes with its new noises, claiming also to be registered: in the immeasurable conflict and concert of this chaos of existence, figure after figure sinks, as *all* that has emerged must one day sink: what cannot be kept in mind will even go out of mind; History contracts itself into readable extent; and at last, in the hands of some Bossuet or Müller, the whole printed History of the World, from the Creation downwards, has grown shorter than that of the Ward of Portsoken for one solar day.

Whether such contraction and epitome is always wisely formed, might admit of question; or rather, as we say, admits of no question. Scandalous Cleopatras and Messalinas, Caligulas and Commoduses, in unprofitable proportion, survive for memory; while a scientific Pancirollus has to write his Book of Arts Lost; and a moral Pancirollus, were the vision lent him, might write a still more mournful Book of Virtues Lost; of noble men, doing and daring and enduring, whose heroic life, as a new revelation and development of Life itself, were a possession for all, but is now lost and forgotten, History having otherwise filled her page. In fact, here as elsewhere, what we call Accident governs much; in any case, History must come together not as it should, but as it can and will.

Remark nevertheless how, by natural tendency alone, and as it were without man's forethought, a certain fitness of selection, and this even to a high degree, becomes inevitable. Wholly worthless the selection could not be, were there no better rule than this to guide it: that men permanently speak only of what is extant and actively alive beside them. Thus do the things that have produced fruit, nay whose fruit still grows, turn out to be the things chosen for record and writing of; which things alone were great, and worth recording. The Battle of Châlons, where Hunland met Rome, and the Earth was played for, at sword-fence, by two earth-bestriding giants, the sweep of whose swords cut kingdoms in pieces, hovers dim in the languid remembrance of a few; while the poor police-court Treachery of a wretched Iscariot, transacted in the wretched land of Palestine, centuries earlier, for "thirty pieces of silver," lives clear in the heads, in the hearts of all men. Nay moreover, as only that which bore fruit was great; so of all things, that whose fruit is still here and growing must be the greatest, the best worth remembering; which again, as we see, by the very nature of the case, is mainly the thing remembered. Observe, too, how this "mainly" tends always to become a "solely," and the approximate continually approaches nearer: for triviality after triviality, as it perishes from the living activity of men, drops away from their speech and memory, and the great and vital more and more exclusively survive there. Thus does Accident correct Accident; and in the wondrous boundless jostle of things (an aimful POWER presiding over it, say rather, dwelling *in* it), a result comes out that may be put up with.

Curious, at all events, and worth looking at once in our life, is this same compressure of History, be the process thereof what it may. How the "forty-eight longitudinal feet" have shrunk together after a century, after ten centuries! Look back from end to beginning, over any History; over our own *England:* how, in rapidest law of perspective, it dwindles from the canvas! An unhappy Sybarite, if we stand within two centuries of him and name him Charles Second, shall have twelve times the space of a heroic Alfred; two or three thousand times, if we name him George the Fourth. The whole Saxon Heptarchy, though events, to which Magna Charta, and the world-famous Third Reading, are as dust in the balance, took place then, — for did not England, to mention nothing else, get itself, if not represented in Parliament, yet converted to Christianity? — the whole Saxon Heptarchy, I say, is summed up practically in that one sentence of Milton's, the only one succeeding writers have copied, or readers remembered, of the "fighting and flocking of kites and crows." Neither was that an unimportant wassail-night, when the two black-browed Brothers, strong-headed, headstrong, Hengst and Horsa (*Stallion* and *Horse*), determined on a man-hunt in Britain, the boar-hunt at home having got overcrowded; and so of a few hungry Angles made an English Nation, and planted it here, and — produced *thee,* O Reader! Of Hengst's whole campaignings scarcely half a page of good Narrative can now be written; the *Lord Mayor's Visit to Oxford* standing, meanwhile, revealed to mankind in a respectable volume. Nay what of this? Does not the Destruction of a Brunswick Theatre take above a million times as much telling as the Creation of a World?

To use a ready-made similitude, we might liken Universal History to a magic web; and consider with astonishment how, by philosophic insight and indolent neglect, the ever-growing fabric wove itself forward, out of that ravelled immeasurable mass of threads and thrums, which we name *Memoirs;* nay, at each new lengthening, at each new *epoch,* changed its whole proportions, its hue and structure to the very origin. Thus, do not the records of a Tacitus acquire new meaning, after seventeen hundred years, in the hands of a Montesquieu? Niebuhr has to reinterpret for us, at a still greater distance, the writings of a Titus Livius: nay, the religious archaic chronicles of a Hebrew Prophet and Lawgiver escape not the like fortune; and many a ponderous Eichhorn scans, with new-ground philosophic spectacles, the revelation of a Moses, and strives to reproduce for this century what, thirty centuries ago, was of plainly infinite significance to all. Consider History with the beginnings of it stretching dimly into the remote Time; emerging darkly out of the mysterious Eternity: the ends of it enveloping *us* at this hour, whereof we at this hour, both as actors and relators, form part! In shape we might mathematically name it *Hyperbolic-Asymptotic;* ever of *infinite* breadth around us: soon shrinking within narrow limits: ever narrowing more and more into the infinite depth behind us. In essence and significance it has been called "the true Epic Poem, and universal Divine Scripture, *whose* 'plenary inspiration' no man, out of Bedlam or in it, shall bring in question."

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DIDEROT.[1]

[1833.]

The *Acts* of the *Christian Apostles*, on which, as we may say, the world has, now for eighteen centuries, had its foundation, are written in so small a compass, that they can be read in one little hour. The *Acts* of the *French Philosophes*, the importance of which is already fast exhausting itself, lie recorded in whole acres of typography, and would furnish reading for a lifetime. Nor is the stock, as we see, yet anywise complete, or within computable distance of completion. Here are Four quite new Octavos, recording the labors, voyages, victories, amours and indigestions of the Apostle Denis: it is but a year or two since a new contribution on Voltaire came before us; since Jean Jacques had a new *Life* written for him; and then of those *Feuilles de Grimm*, what incalculable masses may yet lie dormant in the Petersburg Library, waiting only to be awakened and let slip! — Reading for a lifetime? Thomas Parr might begin reading in long-clothes, and stop in his last hundred and fiftieth year without having ended. And then, as to when the process of addition will cease, and the Acts and Epistles of the Parisian Church of Antichrist will have completed themselves; except in so far as the quantity of paper written on, or even manufactured, in those days, being finite and not infinite, the business one day or other must cease, and the Antichristian Canon close for the last time, — we yet know nothing.

Meanwhile, let us nowise be understood as lamenting this stupendous copiousness, but rather as viewing it historically with patience, and indeed with satisfaction. Memoirs, so long as they are true, how stupid soever, can hardly be accumulated in excess. The stupider they are, let them simply be the sooner cast into the oven; if true, they will always instruct more or less, were it only in the way of confirmation and repetition; and, what is of vast moment, they do not *mis*instruct. Day after day looking at the high destinies which yet await Literature, which Literature will ere long address herself with more decisiveness than ever to fulfil, it grows clearer to us that the proper task of Literature lies in the domain of BELIEF; within which "Poetic Fiction," as it is charitably named. will have to take a quite new figure, if allowed a settlement there. Whereby were it not reasonable to prophesy that this exceeding great multitude of Novel-writers and such like, must, in a new generation, gradually do one of two things: either retire into nurseries, and work for children, minors and semifatuous persons of both sexes; or else, what were far better, sweep their Novel-fabric into the dust-cart, and betake them with such faculty as they have to understand and record what is *true*, — of which, surely, there is, and will forever be, a whole Infinitude unknown to us, of infinite importance to us! Poetry, it will more and more come to be understood, is nothing but higher Knowledge; and the only genuine Romance (for grown persons) Reality. The Thinker is the Poet, the Seer: let him who *sees* write down according to his gift of sight; if deep and with inspired vision, then creatively, poetically; if common, and with only uninspired every-day vision, let him at least be faithful in this and write *Memoirs*.

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[1] Foreign Quarterly Review, No. 22. — 1. *Mémoires, Correspondance et Ouvrages inédits de Diderot; publiés d'après les manuscrits confiés, en mourant, par l'auteur à Grimm.* 4 tom. 8vo. Paris (Paulin, Libraire-Editeur), 1831.

2. *Œuvres de Denis Diderot; précédées de Memoires historiques et philosophiques sur sa Vie et ses Ouvrages, par J. A. Naigeon.* 22 tom. 8vo. Paris (Brière), 1821.

On us still so near at hand, that Eighteenth Century in Paris presenting itself nowise as portion of the magic web of Universal History, but only as the confused and ravelled mass of threads and thrums, ycleped *Memoirs*, in process of *being* woven into such, — imposes a rather complex relation. Of which, however, as of all such, the leading rules may be happily comprised in this very plain one, prescribed by Nature herself: to search in them, so far as they seem worthy, for whatsoever can help us forward on our own path, were it in the shape of intellectual instruction, of moral edification, nay of mere solacement and amusement. The Bourbons, indeed, took a shorter method (the like of which has been often recommended elsewhere): they shut up and hid the *graves* of the Philosophes, hoping that their lives and writings might likewise thereby go out of sight and out of mind; and thus the whole business would be, so to speak, *suppressed*. Foolish Bourbons! These things were not done in a corner, but on high places, before the anxious eyes of all mankind: hidden they can in nowise be: to conquer them, to resist them, our first indispensable preliminary is to see and comprehend them. To us, indeed, as their immediate successors, the right comprehension of them is of prime necessity; for, sent of God or of the Devil, they have plainly enough gone before us, and left us such and such a world: it is on ground of their tillage, with the stubble of their harvest standing on it, that we now have to plough. Before all things, then, let us understand what ground it is; what manner of men and husbandmen these were. For which reason, be all authentic Philosophe-Memoirs welcome, each in its kind! For which reason, let us now, without the smallest reluctance, penetrate into this wondrous Gospel according to Denis Diderot, and expatiate there, to see whether it will yield us aught.

In any phenomenon, one of the most important moments is the *end*. Now this epoch of the Eighteenth or Philosophe-century was properly the End; the End of a Social System which for above a thousand years had been building itself together, and, after that, had begun, for some centuries (as human things all do), to moulder down. The mouldering-down of a Social System is no cheerful business either to form part of, or to look at: however, at length, in the course of it, there comes a time when the mouldering changes into a rushing; active hands drive in their wedges, set to their crowbars; there is a comfortable appearance of work going on. Instead of here and there a stone falling out, here and there a handful of dust, whole masses tumble down, whole clouds and whirlwinds of dust: torches too are applied, and the rotten easily takes fire: so, what with flame-whirlwind, what with dust-whirlwind, and the crash of falling towers, the concern grows eminently interesting; and our assiduous craftsmen can encourage one another with *Vivats,* and cries of *Speed the work.* Add to this, that of all laborers, no one can see such rapid extensive fruit of his labor as the Destroyer can and does: it will not seem unreasonable that measuring from effect to cause, he should esteem his labor as the best and greatest; and a Voltaire, for example, be by his guild-brethren and apprentices confidently accounted "not only the greatest man of this age, but of all past ages, and perhaps the greatest that Nature could produce." Worthy old Nature! She goes on producing whatsoever is needful in each season of her course; and produces, with perfect composure, that Encyclopedist opinion, that she can produce no more.

Such a torch-and-crowbar period, of quick rushing-down and conflagration, was this of the *Siècle de Louis Quinze;* when the Social System having all fallen into rottenness, rain-holes and noisome decay, the shivering natives resolved to cheer their dull abode by the questionable step of setting it on fire. Questionable we call their manner of procedure; the thing itself, as all men may now see, was inevitable; one way or other, whether by prior burning or milder methods, the old house must needs be new-built. We behold the business of pulling down, or at least of assorting the rubbish, still go resolutely on, all over Europe: here and there some traces of new foundation, of new building-up, may now also, to the eye of Hope, disclose themselves.

To get acquainted with Denis Diderot and his life were to see the significant epitome of all this, as it works on the thinking and acting soul of a man, fashions for him a singular element of existence, gives himself therein a peculiar hue and figure. Unhappily, after all that has been written, the matter still is not luminous: to us strangers, much in that foreign economy, and method of working and living, remains obscure; much in the man himself, and his inward nature and structure. But indeed, it is several years since the present Reviewer gave up the idea of what could be called *understanding* any man whatever, even himself. Every Man, within that inconsiderable figure of his, contains a whole Spirit-kingdom and Reflex of the ALL; and, though to the eye but some six standard feet in size, reaches downwards and upwards, unsurveyable, fading into the regions of Immensity and of Eternity. Life everywhere, as woven on that stupendous ever-marvellous "Loom of Time," may be said to fashion itself of a woof of light, indeed, yet on a warp of mystic darkness: only He that created it can understand it. As to this Diderot, had we once got so far that we could, in the faintest degree, personate him; take upon ourselves his character and his environment of circumstances, and act his Life over again, in that small Private-Theatre of ours (under our own Hat), with moderate illusiveness and histrionic effect, — *that* were what, in conformity with common speech, we should name *understanding* him, and could be abundantly content with.

In his manner of appearance before the world, Diderot has been, perhaps to an extreme degree, unfortunate. His literary productions were invariably dashed off in hottest haste, and left generally on the waste of Accident, with an ostrich-like indifference. He had to live, in France, in the sour days of a *Journal de Trevoux;* of a suspicious, decaying Sorbonne. He was too poor to set foreign presses, at Kehl or elsewhere, in motion; too headlong and quick of temper to seek help from those that could: thus must he, if his pen was not to lie idle, write much of which there was no publishing. His Papers accordingly are found flying about, like Sibyl's leaves, in all corners of the world: for many years no tolerable Collection of his Writings was attempted; to this day there is none that in any sense can be called perfect. Two spurious, surreptitious Amsterdam Editions, "or rather formless, blundering Agglomerations," were all that the world saw during his life. Diderot did not hear of these for several years, and then only, it is said, "with peals of laughter," and no other practical step whatever. Of the four that have since been printed (or *re*printed, for Naigeon's, of 1798, is the great original), no one so much as pretends either to be complete, or selected on any system. Brière's, the latest, of which alone we have much personal knowledge, is a well-printed book, perhaps better worth buying than any of the others; yet without arrangement, without coherence, purport; often lamentably in need of commentary; on the whole, in reference to the wants and specialties of this time, as good as *un*edited. Brière seems, indeed, to have hired some person, or thing, to play the part of Editor; or rather more things than one, for they sign themselves Editors in the plural number; and from time to time, throughout the work, some asterisk attracts us to the bottom of the leaf, and to some printed matter subscribed "EDIT^s.:" but unhappily the journey is for most part in vain; in the course of a volume or two, we learn too well that nothing is to be gained there; that the Note, whatever it professedly treat of, will, in strict logical speech, mean only as much as to say: "Reader! thou perceivest that we Editors, to the number of at least two, are alive, and if we had any information would impart it to thee. — EDIT^s." For the rest, these "EDIT^s." are polite people; and with this uncertainty (as to their being persons or things) clearly before them, continue, to all appearance, in moderately good spirits.

One service they, or Brière for them (if, indeed, Brière is not himself they, as we sometimes surmise), have accomplished for us: sought out and printed the long-looked-for, long-lost *Life of Diderot* by Naigeon. The lovers of biography had for years sorrowed over this concealed Manuscript, with a wistfulness from which hope had nigh fled. A certain Naigeon, the beloved disciple of Diderot, had (if his own word, in his own editorial Preface, was to be credited) written a Life of him; and, alas! whither was it now vanished? Surely all that was dark in Denis the Fatalist had there been illuminated: nay, was there not, probably, a glorious "Light-Street" carried through that whole Literary Eighteenth Century? And was not Diderot, long belauded as "the most encyclopedical head that perhaps ever existed," now to show himself as such, in — the new Practical Encyclopædia, philosophic, economic, speculative, digestive, of LIFE, in threescore and ten Years, or Volumes? Diderot too was known as the vividest, noblest talker of his time: considering all that Boswell, with his slender opportunities, had made of Johnson, what was there we had not a right to expect!

By Brière's endeavor, as we said, the concealed Manuscript of Naigeon now lies, as published Volume, on this desk. Alas, a written *life*, too like many an acted life, where hope is one thing, fulfilment quite another! Perhaps, indeed, of all biographies ever put together by the hand of man, this of Naigeon's is the most uninteresting. Foolish Naigeon! We wanted to see and know how it stood with the bodily man, the clothed, boarded, bedded, working and warfaring Denis Diderot, in that Paris of his; how he looked and lived, what he did, what he said: had the foolish Biographer so much as told us what color his stockings were! Of all this, beyond a date or two, not a syllable, not a hint; nothing but a dull, sulky, snuffling, droning, interminable lecture on Atheistic Philosophy; how Diderot came upon Atheism, how he taught it, how true it is, how inexpressibly important. Singular enough, the zeal of *the devil's* house had eaten Naigeon up. A man of coarse, mechanical, perhaps intrinsically rather feeble intellect; and then, with the vehemence of some pulpit-drumming "Gowkthrapple," or "precious Mr. Jabesh Rentowel," — only that *his* kirk is of the *other* complexion! Yet must he too see himself in a wholly backsliding world, where much theism and other scandal still rules; and many times Gowkthrapple Naigeon be tempted to weep by the streams of Babel. Withal, however, he is *wooden;* thoroughly mechanical, as if Vaucanson himself had made him; and that singularly tempers his fury. Let the reader, finally, admire the bounteous produce of this Earth, and how one element bears nothing but the other matches it: here have we not the truest *odium theologicum,* working quite *demono*logically, in a worshipper of the Everlasting Nothing! So much for Naigeon; what we looked for from him, and what we have got.

Must Diderot, then, be given up to oblivion, or remembered not as Man, but merely as Philosophic-Atheistic Logic-Mill? Did not Diderot live, as well as think? An Amateur reporter in some of the Biographical Dictionaries declares that he heard him talk one day, in nightgown and slippers, for the space of two hours, concerning earth, sea and air, with a fulgorous impetuosity almost beyond human, rising from height to height, and at length finish the climax by "dashing his nightcap against the wall." Most readers will admit this to be biography: we, alas, must say, it comprises nearly all about the Man Diderot that hitherto would abide with us.

Here, however, comes "Paulin, Publishing-Bookseller," with a quite new contribution: a long series of Letters, extending over fifteen years; unhappily only love-letters, and from a married sexagenarian; yet still letters from his own hand. Amid these insipid floods of *tendresse*, *sensibilité* and so forth, vapid, like long decanted small-beer, many a curious biographic trait comes to light; indeed, we can hereby see more of the individual Diderot, and his environment, and method of procedure there, than by all the other books that have yet been published of him. Forgetting or conquering the species of nausea that such a business, on the first announcement of it, may occasion, and in many of the details of it cannot but confirm, the biographic reader will find this well worth looking into. Nay, is it not something, of itself, to see that Spectacle of the Philosophe in Love, or at least zealously endeavoring to fancy himself so? For scientific purposes a considerable tedium, of "noble sentiment," and even worse things, can be undergone. How the most encyclopedical head that perhaps ever existed, now on the borders of his grand climacteric, and already provided with wife and child, comports himself in that trying circumstance of preternuptial (and indeed, at such age, and with so many "indigestions," almost preternatural) devotion to the queens of this earth, may, by the curious in science, who have nerves for it, be here seen. There is besides a lively *Memoir* of him by Mademoiselle Diderot, though too brief, and not very true-looking. Finally, in one large Volume, his *Dream of D'Alembert*, greatly regretted and commented upon by Naigeon; which we could have done without. For its bulk, that little *Memoir* by Mademoiselle is the best of the whole. Unfortunately, indeed, as hinted, Mademoiselle, resolute of all things to be *piquante*, writes, or rather *thinks*, in a smart, antithetic manner, nowise the fittest for clearness or credibility:

without suspicion of voluntary falsehood, there is no appearance that this is a camera-lucida picture, or a portrait drawn by legitimate rules of art. Such resolution to be piquant is the besetting sin of innumerable persons of both sexes, and wofully mars any use there might otherwise be in their writing or their speaking. It is, or was, the fault specially imputed to the French: in a woman and Frenchwoman, who besides has much to tell us, it must even be borne with. And now, from these diverse scattered materials, let us try how coherent a figure of Denis Diderot, and his earthly Pilgrimage and Performance, we can piece together.

In the ancient Town of Langres, in the month of October, 1713, it begins. Fancy Langres, aloft on its hill-top, amid Roman ruins, nigh the sources of the Saone and of the Marne, with its coarse substantial houses, and fifteen thousand inhabitants, mostly engaged in knife-grinding; and one of the quickest, clearest, most volatile and susceptive little figures of that century, just landed in the World there. In this French Sheffield, Diderot's Father was a Cutler, master of his craft; a much-respected and respect-worthy man; one of those ancient craftsmen (now, alas! nearly departed from the earth, and sought, with little effect, by idylists, among the "Scottish peasantry" and elsewhere) who, in the school of practice, have learned not only skill of hand, but the far harder skill of head and of heart; whose whole knowledge and virtue, being by necessity a knowledge and virtue to *do* somewhat, is true, and has stood trial: humble modern patriarchs, brave, wise, simple; of worth rude but unperverted, like genuine unwrought silver, native from the mine! Diderot loved his father, as he well might, and regrets on several occasions that he was painted in holiday clothes, and not in the work-day costume of his trade, "with apron and grinder's-wheel, and spectacles pushed up," — even as he lived and labored, and honestly made good for himself the small section of the Universe he pretended to occupy. A man of strictest veracity and integrity was this ancient master; of great insight and patient discretion, so that he was often chosen as umpire and adviser; of great humanity, so that one day crowds of poor were to "follow him with tears to his long home." An outspoken Langres neighbor gratified the now fatherless Philosopher with this saying: "Ah, Monsieur Diderot, you are a famous man, but you will never be your father's equal." Truly, of all the wonderful illustrious persons that come to view in the biographic part of these six-and-twenty Volumes, it is a question whether this old Langres Cutler is not the worthiest; to us no other suggests himself whose worth can be admitted, without lamentable pollutions and defacements to be deducted from it. The Mother also was a loving-hearted, just woman: so Diderot might account himself well-born; and it is a credit to the man that he always, were it in the circle of kings and empresses, gratefully did so.

The Jesuits were his schoolmasters: at the age of twelve the encyclopedical head was "tonsured." He was quick in seizing, strong in remembering and arranging; otherwise flighty enough; fond of sport, and from time to time getting into trouble. One grand event, significant of all this, he has himself commemorated: his Daughter records it in these terms:

"He had chanced to have a quarrel with his comrades: it had been serious enough to bring on him a sentence of exclusion from college on some day of public examination and distribution of prizes. The idea of passing this important time at home, and grieving his parents, was intolerable; he proceeded to the college-gate; the porter refused him admittance; he presses in while some crowd is entering, and sets off running at full speed; the porter gets at him with a sort of pike he carried, and wounds him in the side: the boy will not be driven back; arrives, takes the place that belonged to him: prizes of all sorts, for composition, for memory, for poetry, he obtains them all. No doubt he had deserved them; since even the resolution to punish him could not withstand the sense of justice in his superiors. Several volumes, a number of garlands had fallen to his lot; being too weak to carry them all, he put the garlands round his neck, and with his arms full of books, returned home. His mother was at the door; and saw him coming through the public square in this equipment, and surrounded by his schoolfellows: one should be a mother to conceive what she must have felt. He was feasted, he was caressed: but next Sunday, in dressing him for church, a considerable wound was found on him, of which he had not so much as thought of complaining."

"One of the sweetest moments of my life," writes Diderot himself of this same business, with a slight variation, "was more than thirty years ago, and I remember it like yesterday, when my Father saw me coming home from the college, with my arms full of prizes that I had carried off, and my shoulders with the garlands they had given me, which, being too big for my brow, had let my head slip through them. Noticing me at a distance, he threw down his work, hastened to the door to meet me, and could not help weeping. It is a fine sight, a true man and rigorous falling to weep!"

Mademoiselle, in her quick-sparkling way, informs us, nevertheless, that the school-victor, getting tired of pedagogic admonitions and inflictions, whereof there were many, said "one morning" to his father, "that he meant to give up school"! — "Thou hadst rather be a cutler, then?" — "With all my heart." — They handed him an apron, and he placed himself beside his father. He spoiled whatever he laid hands on, penknives, whittles, blades of all kinds. It went on for four or five days; at the end of which he rose, proceeded to his room, got his books there, and returned to college, — and having, it would appear, in this simple manner sown his college wild-oats, never stirred from it again.

To the Reverend Fathers, it seemed that Denis would make an excellent Jesuit; wherefore they set about coaxing and courting, with intent to crimp him. Here, in some minds, a certain comfortable reflection on the diabolic cunning and assiduity of these Holy Fathers, now happily all dissolved and expelled, will suggest itself. Along with which, may another melancholy reflection no less be in place: namely, that these Devil-serving Jesuits should have shown a skill and zeal in their teaching vocation, such as no Heaven-serving body, of what complexion soever, anywhere on our earth now exhibits. To decipher the talent of a young vague Capability, who must one day be a man and a Reality; to take him by the hand, and train him to a spiritual trade, and set him up in it, with tools, shop and good-will, were doing him in most cases an unspeakable service, — on this one proviso, it is true, that the trade be a just and honest one; in which proviso surely there should lie no hindrance to such service, but rather a help. Nay, could many a poor Dermody, Hazlitt, Heron, Derrick and such like, have been trained to be a good Jesuit, were it greatly worse than to have lived painfully as a bad Nothing-at-all? But indeed, as was said, the Jesuits are dissolved; and Corporations of all sorts have perished (from corpulence); and now, instead of the seven corporate selfish spirits, we have the four-and-twenty millions of discorporate selfish; and the rule, *Man, mind thyself*, makes a jumble and a scramble, and crushing press (with dead-pressed figures and dismembered limbs enough); into whose dark chaotic depths (for human Life is ever unfathomable) one shudders to look. Loneliest of all, weakest and worst-bested, in that world-scramble, is the extraordinary figure known in these times as Man of Letters! It appears to be indubitable that this state of matters will alter and improve itself, — in a century or two. But to return: —

"The Jesuits," thus sparkles Mademoiselle, "employed the temptation, which is always so seductive, of travelling and of liberty; they persuaded the youth to quit his home, and set forth with a Jesuit, to whom he was attached. Denis had a friend, a cousin of his own age; he intrusted his secret to him, wishing that he should accompany them. But the cousin, a tamer and discreeter personage, discovered the whole project to the father; the day of departure, the hour, all was betrayed. My grandfather kept the strictest silence; but before going to sleep he carried off the keys of the street-door; and at midnight, hearing his son descend, he presented himself before him, with the question, 'Whither bound, at such an hour?' 'To Paris,' replied the young man, 'where I am to join the Jesuits.' — 'That will not be to-night; but your desires shall be fulfilled: let us in the first place go to sleep.'

"Next morning his father engaged two places in the public conveyance, and carried him to Paris, to the College d'Harcourt. He settled the terms of his little establishment, and bade his son good-b'ye. But the worthy man loved his child too well to leave him without being quite satisfied about his situation: he had the constancy to stay a fortnight longer, killing the time, and dying of tedium, in an inn, without seeing the sole object he was delaying for. At the end, he proceeded to the College; and my father has often told me that this proof of tenderness would have made him go to the end of the world, if the old man had required it. 'Friend,' said he, 'I am come to know if your health keeps good; if you are content with your superiors, with your diet, with others and with yourself. If you are not well, if you are not happy, we will go back again to your mother. If you like better to remain here, I have but to speak a word with you, to embrace you, and give you my blessing.' The youth assured him that he was perfectly content, that he liked his new abode very much. My grandfather then took leave of him, and went to the Principal, to know if he was satisfied with his pupil."

On which side also the answer proving favorable, the worthy father returned home. Denis saw little more of him; never again residing under his roof; though for many years, and to the last, a proper intercourse was kept up; not, as appears, without a visit or two on the son's part, and certainly with the most unwearied, prudent superintendence and assistance on the father's. Indeed, it was a worthy family, that of the Diderots; and a fair degree of natural affection must be numbered among the virtues of our Philosophe. Those scenes about rural Langres, and the old homely way of life there, as delineated fictitiously in the *Entretien d'un Père avec ses Enfans,* and now more fully, as matter of fact, in this just-published *Correspondance,* are of a most innocent, cheerful, peacefully secluded character; more pleasing, we might almost say more poetical, than could elsewhere be gathered out of Diderot's whole Writings. Denis was the eldest of the family, and much looked up to, with all his shortcomings: there was a Brother, who became a clergyman; and a true-hearted, sharpwitted Sister, who remained unmarried, and at times tried to live in partnership with this latter, — rather unsuccessfully. The Clergyman being a conscientious, even strait-laced man, and Denis such as we know, they had, naturally enough, their own difficulties to keep on brotherly terms; and indeed, at length abandoned the task as hopeless. The Abbé stood rigorous by his Breviary, from time to time addressing solemn monitions to the lost Philosophe, who also went on his way. He is somewhat snarled at by the Denisian side of the house for this; but surely without ground: it was his virtue rather; at lowest his destiny. The true Priest, who could, or should, look peaceably on an *Encyclopédie*, is yet perhaps waited for in the world; and of all false things, is not a false Priest the falsest?

Meanwhile Denis, at the College d'Harcourt, learns additional Greek and Mathematics, and quite loses taste for the Jesuit career. Mad pranks enough he played, we doubt not; followed by reprimands. He made several friends, however; got intimate with the Abbé Bernis, Poet at that time, afterwards Cardinal. "They used to dine together, for six sous apiece, at the neighboring *Traiteur's;* and I have often heard him vaunt the gayety of these repasts."

"His studies being finished," continues Mademoiselle, "his father wrote to M. Clement de Ris, a Procureur at Paris, and his countryman, to take him as boarder, that he might study Jurisprudence and the Laws. He continued here two years; but the business of *actes* and *inventaires* had few charms for him. All the time he could steal from the office-desk was employed in prosecuting Latin and Greek, in which he thought himself still imperfect; Mathematics, which he to the last continued passionately fond of; Italian, English, &c. In the end he gave himself up so completely to his taste for letters, that M. Clement thought it right to inform his father how ill the youth was employing his time. My grandfather then expressly commissioned M. Clement to urge and constrain him to make choice of some profession, and, once for all, to become Doctor, Procureur, or Advocate. My father begged time to think of it; time was given. At the end of several months these proposals were again laid before him: he answered, that the profession of Doctor did not please him, for he could not think of killing anybody; that the Procureur business was too difficult to execute with delicacy; that he would willingly choose the profession of Advocate, were it not that he felt an invincible repugnance to occupy himself all his life with other people's business. 'But,' said M. Clement, 'what *will* you be, then?'—'On my word, nothing, nothing whatever (*Ma foi, rien, mais rien du tout*). I love study; I am very happy, very content, and want nothing else.'"

Here clearly is a youth of spirit, determined to take the world on the broadside, and eat thereof and be filled. His decided turn, like that of so many others, is for the trade of sovereign prince, in one shape or other; unhappily, however, the capital and outfit to set it up is wanting. Under which circumstances, nothing remains but to instruct M. Clement de Ris that no board-wages will henceforth be paid, and the young sovereign may, at his earliest convenience, be turned out of doors.

What Denis, perched aloft in his own hired attic, may have thought of it now, does not appear. The good old Father, in stopping his allowance, had reasonably enough insisted on one of two things: either that he should betake him to some intelligible method of existence, wherein all help should be furnished him; or else return home within the week. Neither of which could Denis think of doing. A similar demand continued to be reiterated for the next ten years, but always with the like non-effect. King Denis, in his furnished attic, with or without money to pay for it, was now living and reigning, like other kings, "by the grace of God;" and could nowise resolve to abdicate. A sanguineous, vehement, volatile mortal; young, and in so wide an earth, it seemed to him next to impossible but he must find gold-mines there. He lived, while victual was to be got, taking no thought for the morrow. He had books, he had merry company, a whole piping and dancing Paris round him; he could teach Mathematics, he could turn himself so many ways; nay, might not he become a Mathematician one day; a glorified Savant, and strike the stars with his sublime head! Meanwhile he is like to be overtaken by one of the sharpest of human calamities, "cleanness of teeth."

"One Shrove Tuesday morning, he rises, gropes in his pocket; he has not wherewith to dine; will not trouble his friends who have not invited him. This day, which in childhood he had so often passed in the middle of relations who adored him, becomes sadder by remembrance: he cannot work; he hopes to dissipate his melancholy by a walk; goes to the Invalides, to the Courts, to the Bibliothèque du Roi, to the Jardin des Plantes. You may drive away tedium; but you cannot give hunger the slip. He returns to his quarters; on entering he feels unwell; the landlady gives him a little toast and wine; he goes to bed. 'That day,' he has often said to me, 'I swore that, if ever I came to have anything, I would never in my life refuse a poor man help, never condemn my fellow-creature to a day as painful.'"

That Diderot, during all this period, escaped starvation, is plain enough by the result: but how he specially accomplished that, and the other business of living, remains mostly left to conjecture. Mademoiselle, confined at any rate within narrow limits, continues as usual too intent on sparkling: is *brillante* and *pétillante*, rather than lucent and illuminating. How inferior, for *seeing* with, is your brightest train of fireworks to the humblest farthing candle! Who Diderot's companions, friends, enemies, patrons were, what his way of life was, what the Paris he lived in and from his garret looked down on was, we learn only in hints, dislocated, enigmatic. It is in general to be impressed on us, that young Denis, as a sort of spiritual swashbuckler, who went about conquering Destiny, in light rapier-fence, by way of amusement; or at lowest, in reverses, gracefully insulting her with mock reverences, — lived and acted like no other man; all which being freely admitted, we ask, with small increase of knowledge, How did he act, then?

He gave lessons in Mathematics, we find; but with the princeliest indifference as to payment: "was his scholar lively, and prompt of conception, he sat by him teaching all day; did he chance on a blockhead, he returned not back. They paid him in books, in movables, in linen, in money, or not at all; it was quite the same." Farther, he made Sermons to order; as the Devil is said to quote Scripture: a Missionary bespoke half a dozen of him (of Denis, that is) for the Portuguese Colonies, and paid for them very handsomely at fifty crowns each. Once a family Tutorship came in his way, with tolerable appointments, but likewise with incessant duties: at the end of three months, he waits upon the house-father with this abrupt communication: "I am come, Monsieur, to request you to seek a new tutor; I cannot remain with you any longer." — "But, Monsieur Diderot, what is your grievance? Have you too little salary? I will double it. Are you ill-lodged? Choose your apartment. Is your table ill-served? Order your own dinner. All will be cheap to parting with you." — "Monsieur, look at me: a citron is not so yellow as my face. I am making men of your children; but every day I am becoming a child with them. I feel a hundred times too rich and too well off in your house; yet I must leave it: the object of my wishes is not to live better, but to keep from dying."

Mademoiselle grants that, if sometimes "drunk with gayety," he was often enough plunged in bitterness; but then a Newtonian problem, a fine thought, or any small godsend of that sort, would instantly cheer him again. The "gold-mines" had not yet come to light. Meanwhile, between him and starvation we can still discern Langres covertly stretching out its hand. Of any Langres man, coming in his way, Denis frankly borrows; and the good old Father refuses not to pay. The Mother is still kinder, at least softer: she sends him direct help, as she can; not by the post, but by a serving-maid, who travelled these sixty leagues on foot; delivered him a small sum from his mother; and, without mentioning it, added all her own savings thereto. This Samaritan journey she performed three times. "I saw her some years ago," adds Mademoiselle; "she spoke of my father with tears; her whole desire was to see him again: sixty years' service had impaired neither her sense nor her sensibility."

It is granted also that his company was "sometimes good, sometimes indifferent, not to say bad." Indeed, putting all things together, we can easily fancy that the last sort was the preponderating. It seems probable that Denis, during these ten years of probation, walked chiefly in the subterranean shades of Rascaldom; now swilling from full Circe-goblets, now snuffing with haggard expectancy the hungry wind; always "sorely flamed on from the neighboring hell." In some of his fictitious writings, a most intimate acquaintance with the nether world of Polissons, Escrocs, Filles de Joie, Maroufles, Maquerelles, and their ways of doing, comes to light: among other things (as may be seen in *Jacques le Fataliste*, and elsewhere), a singular theoretic expertness in what is technically named "raising the wind;" which miracle, indeed, Denis himself is expressly (in this *Mémoire*) found once performing, and in a style to require legal cognizance, had not the worthy Father "sneered at the dupe, and paid." The dupe here was a proselytizing Abbé, whom the dog glozed with professions of life-weariness and turning monk; which all evaporated, once the money was in his hands. On other occasions, it might turn out otherwise, and the gudgeon-fisher hook some shark of prey.

Literature, except in the way of Sermons for the Portuguese Colonies, or other the like small private dealings, had not yet opened her hospitable bosom to him. Epistles, precatory and amatory, for such as had more cash than grammar, he may have written; Catalogues also, Indexes, Advertisements, and, in these latter cases, even seen himself in print. But now he ventures forward, with bolder step, towards the interior mysteries, and begins producing Translations from the English. Literature, it is true, was then, as now, the universal free-hospital and Refuge for the Destitute, where all mortals, of what color and kind soever, had liberty to live, or at least to die: nevertheless, for an enterprising man its resources at that time were comparatively limited. Newspapers were few; Reporting existed not, still less the inferior branches, with their fixed rate per line: Packwood and Warren, much more Panckouke and Colburn, as yet slumbered (the last century of their slumber) in the womb of Chaos; Fragmentary Panegyric-literature had not yet come into being, therefore could not be paid for. Talent wanted a free staple and workshop, where wages might be certain; and too often, like virtue, was praised and left starving. Lest the reader overrate the munificence of the literary cornucopia in France at this epoch, let us lead him into a small historical scene, that he may see with his own eyes. Diderot is the historian; the date too is many years later, when times, if anything, were mended: —

"I had given a poor devil a manuscript to copy. The time he had promised it at having expired, and my man not appearing, I grow uneasy; set off to hunt him out. I find him in a hole the size of my hand, almost without daylight, not the wretchedest tatter of serge to cover his walls; two straw-bottom chairs, a flock-bed, the coverlet chiselled with worms, without curtains; a trunk in a corner of the chimney, rags of all sorts hooked above it; a little white-iron lamp, with a bottle for pediment to it; on a deal shelf, a dozen of excellent books. I chatted with him three quarters of an hour. My gentleman was naked as a worm [*nu comme un ver:* it was August]; lean, dingy, dry, yet serene, complaining of nothing, eating his junk of bread with appetite, and from time to time caressing his beloved, who reclined on that miserable truckle, taking up two thirds of the room. If I had not known that happiness resides in the soul, my Epictetus of the Rue Hyacinthe might have taught it me."

Notwithstanding all which, Denis, now in his twenty-ninth year, sees himself necessitated to fall desperately and over head and ears in love. It was a virtuous, pure attachment; his first of that sort, probably also his last. Readers who would see the business poetically delineated, and what talent Diderot had for such delineations, may read this scene in the once-noted Drama of the *Père de Famille.* It is known that he drew from the life; and with few embellishments, which too, except in the French Theatre, do not beautify.

"Act I. Scene 7.

Saint-Albin. Father, you shall know all. Alas, how else can I move you? — The first time I ever saw her was at church. She was on her knees at the foot of the altar, beside an aged woman, whom I took for her mother. Ah, father! what modesty, what charms! . . . Her image followed me by day, haunted me by night, left me rest nowhere. I lost my cheerfulness, my health, my peace. I could not live without seeking to find her. . . . She has changed me; I am no longer what I was. From the first moment all shameful desires fade away from my soul; respect and admiration succeed them. Without rebuke or restraint on her part, perhaps before she had raised her eyes on me, I became timid; more so from day to day; and soon I felt as little free to attempt her virtue as her life.

The Father. And who are these women? How do they live?

Saint-Albin. Ah! if you knew it, unhappy as they are! Imagine that their toil begins before day, and often they have to continue it through the night. The mother spins on the wheel; hard coarse cloth is between the soft small fingers of Sophie, and wounds them.[1] Her eyes, the brightest eyes in this world, are worn at the light of a lamp. She lives in a garret, within four bare walls; a wooden table, a couple of chairs, a truckle-bed, that is their furniture. O Heavens, when ye fashioned such a creature, was this the lot ye destined her?

The Father. And how got you access? Speak me truth.

Saint-Albin. It is incredible what obstacles I had, what I surmounted. Though now lodged there, under the same roof, I at first did not seek to see them: if we met on the stairs, coming up, going down, I saluted them respectfully. At night, when I came home (for all day I was supposed to be at my work), I would go knock gently at their door; ask them for the little services usual among neighbors, — as water, fire, light. By degrees they grew accustomed to me; rather took to me. I offered to serve them in little things; for instance, they disliked going out at night; I fetched and carried for them."

The real truth here is, "I ordered a set of shirts from them; said I was a Church-licentiate just bound for the Seminary of

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[1] The real trade appears to have been a "sempstress one in laces and linens:" the poverty is somewhat exaggerated; otherwise the shadow may be faithful enough.

St. Nicholas, — and, above all, had the tongue of the old serpent." But to skip much, and finish: —

> "Yesterday I came as usual: Sophie was alone; she was sitting with her elbows on the table, her head leant on her hand; her work had fallen at her feet. I entered without her hearing me; she sighed. Tears escaped from between her fingers, and ran along her arms. For some time, of late, I had seen her sad. Why was she weeping? What was it that grieved her? Want it could no longer be; her labor and my attentions provided against that. Threatened by the only misfortune terrible to me, I did not hesitate: I threw myself at her knees. What was her surprise! Sophie, said I, you weep; what ails you? Do not hide your trouble from me: speak to me; oh, speak to me! She spoke not. Her tears continued flowing. Her eyes, where calmness no longer dwelt, but tears and anxiety, bent towards me, then turned away, then turned to me again. She said only, Poor Sergi! unhappy Sophie! — I had laid my face on her knees; I was wetting her apron with my tears."

In a word, there is nothing for it but marriage. Old Diderot, joyous as he was to see his Son once more, started back in indignation and derision from such a proposal: and young Diderot had to return to Paris, and be forbid the beloved house, and fall sick, and come to the point of death, before the fair one's scruples could be subdued. However, she sent to get news of him; "learnt that his room was a perfect dog-kennel, that he lay without nourishment, without attendance, wasted, sad: thereupon she took her resolution; mounted to him, promised to be his wife; and mother and daughter now became his nurses. So soon as he recovered, they went to Saint-Pierre, and were married at midnight (1744)." It only remains to add, that if the Sophie whom he had wedded fell much short of this Sophie whom he delineates, the fault was less in her qualities than in his own unstable fancy: as in youth she was "tall, beautiful, pious and wise," so through a long life she seems to have approved herself a woman of courage, discretion, faithful affection; far too good a wife for such a husband.

"My father was of too jealous a character to let my mother continue a traffic, which obliged her to receive strangers and treat with them: he begged her therefore to give up that business; she was very loath to consent; poverty did not alarm her on her own account, but her mother was old, unlikely to remain with her long; and the fear of not being able to provide for all her wants was afflicting: nevertheless, persuading herself that this sacrifice was for her husband's happiness, she made it. A char-woman looked in daily, to sweep their little lodging, and fetch provisions for the day; my mother managed all the rest. Often when my father dined or supped out, she would dine or sup on bread; and took a great pleasure in the thought that, next day, she could double her little ordinary for him. Coffee was too considerable a luxury for a household of this sort: but she could not think of his wanting it, and every day gave him six sous to go and have his cup, at the Café de la Régence, and see the chess-playing there.

"It was now that he translated the *History of Greece* in three volumes [by the English Stanyan]; he sold it for a hundred crowns. This sum brought a sort of supply into the house. . . .

"My mother had been brought to bed of a daughter: she was now big a second time. In spite of her precautions, solitary life, and the pains she had taken to pass off her husband as her brother, his family, in the seclusion of their province, learnt that he was living with two women. Directly, the birth, the morals, the character of my mother became objects of the blackest calumny. He foresaw that discussions by letter would be endless; he found it simpler to put his wife into the stage-coach, and send her to his parents. She had just been delivered of a son; he announced this event to his father, and the departure of my mother. 'She set out yesterday,' said he; 'she will be with you in three days. You will say to her what shall please you, and send her back when you are tired of her.' Singular as this sort of explanation was, they determined, in any case, on sending my father's sister to receive her. Their first welcome was more than cold: the evening grew less painful to her; but next morning betimes she went in to her father-in-law; treated him as if he had been her own father; her respect and her caresses charmed the good, sensible old man. Coming down stairs, she began working: refused nothing that could please a family whom she was not afraid of, and wished to be loved by. Her conduct was the only excuse she gave for her husband's choice: her appearance had prepossessed them in her favor; her simplicity, her piety, her talents for household economy secured her their tenderness; they promised her that my father's disinheritment should be revoked. They kept her three months; and sent her back loaded with whatever they could think would be useful or agreeable to her."

All this is beautiful, told with a graceful simplicity; the beautiful, real-ideal prose-idyl of a Literary Life: but, alas, in the music of your prose-idyl there lurks ever an accursed dissonance (or the players make one); where men are, there will be mischief. "This journey," writes Mademoiselle, "cost my mother many tears." What will the reader say when he finds that Monsieur Diderot has, in the interim, taken up with a certain Madame de Puisieux; and welcomes his brave Wife (worthy to have been a true man's) with a heart and bosom henceforth estranged from her! Madame Diderot "made two journeys to Langres, and both were fatal to her peace." This affair of the Puisieux, for whom he despicably enough not only burned, but toiled and made money, kept him busy for some ten years; till at length, finding that she played false, he gave her up; and minor miscellaneous flirtations seem to have succeeded. But, returning from her *second* journey, the much-enduring House-mother finds him in meridian glory with one Voland, the *un*-maiden Daughter of a "Financier's Widow;" to whom we owe this present preternuptial *Correspondance;* to whom indeed he mainly devoted himself for the rest of his life, — "parting his time between his study and her;" to his own wife and household giving little save the trouble of cooking for him, and of painfully, with repressed or irrepressible discontent, keeping up some appearance of terms with him. Alas! alas! and his Puisieux seems to have been a hollow mercenary (to whose scandalous soul he reckons obscenest of Books fit nutriment); and the Voland an elderly spinster, with *cœur sensible, cœur honnête, âme tendre et bonne!*

And then those old dinings on bread; the six sous spared for his cup of coffee! Foolish Diderot, scarcely pardonable Diderot! A hard saying is this, yet a true one: Scoundrelism signifies injustice, and should be left to scoundrels alone. For thy wronged wife, whom thou hadst sworn far other things to, ever in her afflictions (here so hostilely scanned and written of) a true sympathy will awaken: and sorrow that the patient, or even impatient, endurances of such a woman should be matter of speculation and self-gratulation to such another.

But looking out of doors now, from an indifferently guided Household, which must have fallen shamefully in pieces, had not a wife been wiser and stronger than her husband, — we find the Philosophe making distinct way with the Bibliopolic world; and likely, in the end, to pick up a kind of living there. The Stanyan's *History of Greece;* the other English-translated, nameless *Medical Dictionary,* are dropped by all editors as worthless: a like fate might, with little damage, have overtaken the *Essai sur le Mérite et la Vertu,* rendered or redacted out of Shaftesbury's *Characteristics.* In which redaction, with its Notes, of anxious Orthodoxy, and bottomless Falsehood looking through it, we individually have found nothing, save a confirmation of the old twice-repeated experience, That in Shaftesbury's famed Book there lay, if any meaning, a meaning of such long-windedness, circumvolution and lubricity, that, like an eel, it must forever slip through our fingers, and leave us alone among the gravel. One reason may partly be, that Shaftesbury was not only a Sceptic but an Amateur Sceptic; which sort a darker, more earnest, have long since swallowed and abolished. The meaning of a delicate, perfumed, gentlemanly individual standing there, in that war of Titans (hill meeting hill with all its woods), and putting out hand to it — with a pair of tweezers?

However, our Denis has now emerged from the intermediate Hades of Translatorship into the Heaven of perfected Authorship: empties his commonplace book of *Pensées Philosophiques* (it is said in the space of four days); writes his Metaphysico-Baconian phantasmagories on the *Interprétation de la Nature* (an endless business to "interpret"); and casts the money-produce of both into the lap of his Scarlet-woman Puisieux. Then forthwith, for the same object, in a shameful fortnight, puts together the beastliest of all past, present or future dull Novels; a difficult feat, unhappily not an impossible one. If any mortal creature, even a Reviewer, be again compelled to glance into that Book, let him bathe himself in running water, put on change of raiment, and be unclean until the even. As yet the Metaphysico-Atheistic *Lettre sur les Sourds et Muets* and *Lettre sur les Aveugles*, which brings glory and a three-months lodging in the Castle of Vincennes, are at years' distance in the background. But already by his gilded tongue, growing repute and sanguine projecting temper, he has persuaded Booksellers to pay off the Abbé Gua, with his lean Version of *Chambers's Dictionary of Arts*, and convert it into an *Encyclopédie*, with himself and D'Alembert for Editors: and is henceforth (from the year of grace 1751) a duly dis-indentured *Man of Letters*, an indisputable and more and more conspicuous member of that surprising guild.

Literature, ever since its appearance in our European world, especially since it emerged out of Cloisters into the open Market-place, and endeavored to make itself room, and gain a subsistence there, has offered the strangest phases, and consciously or unconsciously done the strangest work. Wonderful Ark of the Deluge, where so much that is precious, nay priceless to mankind, floats carelessly onwards through the Chaos of distracted Times, — if so be it may one day find an Ararat to rest on, and see the waters abate! The History of Literature, especially for the last two centuries, is our proper Church History; the other Church, during that time, having more and more decayed from its old functions and influence, and ceased to have a history. And now, to look only at the outside of the matter, think of the Tassos and older or later Racines, struggling to raise their office from its pristine abasement of court-jester; and teach and elevate the World, in conjunction with that other quite heteroclite task of solacing and glorifying some *Pullus Jovis*, in plush cloak and other gilt or golden king-tackle, that they in the interim might live thereby! Consider the Shakspeares and Molières, plying a like trade, but on a double material; glad of any royal or noble patronage, but eliciting, as their surer stay, some fractional contribution from the thick-skinned, many-pocketed million. Saumaises, now bully-fighting "for a hundred gold Jacobuses," now closeted with Queen Christinas, who blow the fire with their own queenly mouth, to make a pedant's breakfast; anon cast forth (being scouted and confuted), and dying of heartbreak, coupled with henpeck. Then the Laws of Copyright, the Quarrels of Authors, the Calamities of Authors; the Heynes dining on boiled peascods, the Jean Pauls on water; the Johnsons bedded and boarded on fourpence halfpenny a day. Lastly, the unutterable confusion worse confounded of our present Periodical existence; when, among other phenomena, a young Fourth Estate (whom all the three elder may try if they can hold) is seen sprawling and staggering tumultuously through the world; as yet but a huge, raw-boned, lean *calf;* fast growing, however, to be a Pharaoh's lean cow, — of whom let the fat kine beware!

All this, of the mere exterior, or dwelling-place of Literature, not yet glancing at the internal, at the Doctrines emitted or striven after, will the future Eusebius and Mosheim have to record; and (in some small degree) explain to us what it means. Unfathomable is its meaning: Life, mankind's Life, ever from its unfathomable fountains, rolls wondrous on, another though the same; in Literature too, the seeing eye will distinguish Apostles of the Gentiles, Proto- and Deuteromartyrs; still less will the Simon Magus, or Apollonius with the golden thigh, be wanting. But all now is on an infinitely *wider scale;* the elements of it all swim far-scattered, and still only striving towards union; — whereby, indeed, it happens that to the most, under this new figure, they are unrecognizable.

French Literature, in Diderot's time, presents itself in a certain state of culmination, where causes long prepared are rapidly becoming effects; and was doubtless in one of its more notable epochs. Under the Economic aspect, in France, as in England, this was the Age of Booksellers; when, as a Dodsley and Miller could risk capital in an *English Dictionary*, a Lebreton and Briasson could become purveyors and commissariat-officers for a French *Encyclopédie.* The world forever loves Knowledge, and would part with its last sixpence in payment thereof: this your Dodsleys and Lebretons well saw; moreover they could act on it, for as yet PUFFERY was not. Alas, offences must come; Puffery from the first was inevitable: woe to them, nevertheless, by whom it did come! Meanwhile, as we said, it slept in Chaos; the Word of man and tradesman was still partially credible to man. Booksellers were therefore a possible, were even a necessary class of mortals, though a strangely anomalous one; had they kept from lying, or lied with any sort of moderation, the anomaly might have lasted still longer. For the present, they managed in Paris as elsewhere: the Timber-headed could perceive that for Thought the world would give money; farther, by mere shopkeeper cunning, that true Thought, as in the end sure to be recognized, and by nature infinitely more durable, was better to deal in than false; farther, by credible tradition of public consent, that such and such had the talent of furnishing true Thought (say rather *truer*, as the more correct word): on this hint the Timber-headed spake and bargained. Nay, let us say he bargained, and worked, for most part with industrious assiduity, with patience, suitable prudence; nay sometimes with touches of generosity and magnanimity, beautifully irradiating the circumambient mass of greed and dulness. For the rest, the two high contracting parties roughed it out as they could; so that if Booksellers, in their back-parlor Valhalla, drank wine out of the skulls of Authors (as they were fabled to do), Authors, in the front-apartments, from time to time, gave them a Roland for their Oliver: a Johnson can knock his Osborne on the head, like any other Bull of Bashan; a Diderot commands his corpulent Panckouke to "Leave the room, and go to the devil; *Allez au diable, sortez de chez moi!*"

Under the internal or Doctrinal aspect, again, French Literature, we can see, knew far better what it was about than English. That fable, indeed, first set afloat by some Trevoux

Journalist of the period, and which has floated foolishly enough into every European ear since then, of there being an Association specially organized for the destruction of government, religion, society, civility (not to speak of tithes, rents, life and property), all over the world; which hell-serving Association met at the Baron d'Holbach's, there had its blue-light sederunts, and published Transactions legible to all, — was and remains nothing but a fable. Minute-books, president's hammer, ballot-box, punch-bowl of such Pandemonium have not been produced to the world. The sect of Philosophes existed at Paris, but as other sects do; held together by loosest, informal, unrecognized ties; within which every one, no doubt, followed his own natural objects, of proselytism, of glory, of getting a livelihood. Meanwhile, whether in constituted association or not, French Philosophy resided in the persons of the French Philosophes; and, as a mighty deep-struggling Force, was at work there. Deep-struggling, irrepressible; the subterranean fire, which long heaved unquietly, and shook all things with an ominous motion, was here, we can say, forming itself a decided spiracle; — which, by and by, as French Revolution, became that volcano-crater, world-famous, world-appalling, world-maddening, as yet very far from closed! Fontenelle said, he wished he could live sixty years longer, and see what that universal infidelity, depravity and dissolution of all ties would turn to. In threescore years Fontenelle might have seen strange things; but not the end of the phenomenon perhaps in three hundred.

Why France became such a volcano-crater, what specialties there were in the French national character, and political, moral, intellectual condition, by virtue whereof French Philosophy there and not elsewhere, then and not sooner or later, evolved itself, — is an inquiry that has been often put, and cheerfully answered; the true answer of which might lead us far. Still deeper than this *Whence* were the question of *Whither*; — with which, also, we intermeddle not here. Enough for us to understand that there verily a Scene of Universal History is being enacted, a little living TIME-picture in the bosom of ETERNITY; — and, with the feeling due in that case, to ask not so much Why it is, as What it is. Leaving priorities and posteriorities aside, and cause-and-effect to adjust itself elsewhere, conceive so many vivid spirits thrown together into the Europe, into the Paris of that day, and see how they demean themselves, what they work out and attain there.

As the *mystical* enjoyment of an object goes infinitely farther than the *intellectual*, and we can *look* at a picture with delight and profit, after all that we can be *taught* about it is grown poor and wearisome; so here, and by far stronger reason, these light Letters of Diderot to the Voland, again unveiling and *showing* Parisian Life, are worth more to us than many a heavy tome laboriously struggling to explain it. True, we have seen the picture, that same Parisian life-picture, ten times already; but we can look at it an eleventh time: nay this, as we said, is not a canvas-picture, but a life-picture, of whose significance there is no end for us. Grudge not the elderly Spinster her existence, then; say not she has lived in vain. For what of History there is in this Preternuptial Correspondence should we not endeavor to forgive and forget all else, the *sensibilité* itself? The curtain which had fallen for almost a century is again drawn up; the scene is alive and busy. Figures grown historical are here seen face to face, and live before us.

A strange theatre that of French Philosophism; a strange dramatic corps! Such another corps for brilliancy and levity, for gifts and vices, and all manner of sparkling inconsistencies, the world is not like to see again. There is Patriarch Voltaire, of all Frenchmen the most French; he whom the French had, as it were, long waited for, "to produce at once, in a single life, all that French genius most prized and most excelled in;" of him and his wondrous ways, as of one known, we need say little. Instant enough to "crush the Abomination, *écraser l'Infâme*," he has prosecuted his Jesuit-hunt over many lands and many centuries, in many ways, with an alacrity that has made him dangerous, and endangered him: he now sits at Ferney, withdrawn from the active toils of the chase; cheers on his hunting-dogs mostly from afar: Diderot, a beagle of the first vehemence, he has rather to restrain. That all extant and possible Theology be abolished, will not content the fell Denis, as surely it might have done; the Patriarch has to address him a friendly admonition on his Atheism, and make him eat it again.

D'Alembert, too, we may consider as one known; of all the Philosophe fraternity, him who in speech and conduct agrees best with our English notions: an independent, patient, prudent man; of great faculty, especially of great clearness and method; famous in Mathematics; no less so, to the wonder of some, in the intellectual provinces of Literature. A foolish wonder; as if the Thinker could think only on one thing, and not on *any* thing he had a call towards. D'Alembert's *Mélanges*, as the impress of a genuine spirit, in peculiar position and probation, have still instruction for us, both of head and heart. The man lives retired here, in questionable seclusion with his Espinasse; incurs the suspicion of apostasy, because in the *Encyclopédie* he saw no Evangel and celestial Revelation, but only a huge Folio Dictionary; and would not venture life and limb on it without a "consideration." Sad was it to Diderot to see his fellow-voyager make for port, and disregard signals, when the sea-krakens rose round him! They did not quarrel; were always friendly when they met, but latterly met only at the rate of "once in the two years." D'Alembert died when Diderot was on his death-bed: "My friend," said the latter to the news-bringer, "a great light is gone out."

Hovering in the distance, with woe-struck, minatory air, stern-beckoning, comes Rousseau. Poor Jean Jacques! Alternately deified, and cast to the dogs; a deep-minded, high-minded, even noble, yet wofully misarranged mortal, with all misformations of Nature intensated to the verge of madness by unfavorable Fortune. A lonely man; his life a long soliloquy! The wandering Tiresias of the time; — in whom, however, did lie prophetic meaning, such as none of the others offer. Whereby indeed it might partly be that the world went to such extremes about him; that, long after his departure, we have seen one whole nation worship him, and a Burke, in the name of another, class him with the off-scourings of the earth. His true character, with its lofty aspirings and poor performings; and how the spirit of the man worked so wildly, like celestial fire in a thick dark element of chaos, and shot forth ethereal radiance, all-piercing lightning, yet could not illuminate, was quenched and did not conquer: this, with what lies in it, may now be pretty accurately appreciated. Let his history teach all whom it concerns, to "*harden* themselves against the ills which Mother Nature will try them with;" to seek within their own soul what the world must forever deny them; and say composedly to the Prince of the Power of this lower Earth and Air: Go thou thy way; I go mine!

Rousseau and Diderot were early friends: who has forgotten how Jean Jacques walked to the Castle of Vincennes, where Denis (for heretical Metaphysics, and irreverence to the Strumpetocracy) languishes in durance; and devised his first Literary Paradox on the road thither? Their Quarrel, which, as a fashionable hero of the time complains, occupied all Paris, is likewise famous enough. The reader recollects that heroical epistle of Diderot to Grimm on that occasion, and the sentence: "Oh, my friend, let us continue virtuous; for the state of those who have ceased to be so makes me shudder." But is the reader aware what the fault of him "who has ceased to be so" was? A series of ravelments and squabbling grudges, "which," says Mademoiselle with much simplicity, "the Devil himself could not understand." Alas, the Devil well understood it, and Tyrant Grimm too did, who had the ear of Diderot, and poured into it his own unjust, almost abominable spleen. Clean paper need not be soiled with a foul story, where the main actor is only "Tyran le Blanc;" enough to know that the continually virtuous Tyrant found Diderot "extremely impressionable;" so poor Jean Jacques must go his ways (with both the scath and the scorn), and among his many woes bear this also. Diderot is not blamable; pitiable rather; for who would be a pipe, which not Fortune only, but any Sycophant may play tunes on?

Of this same Tyrant Grimm, desiring to speak peaceably, we shall say little. The man himself is less remarkable than his fortune. Changed times indeed, since the threadbare German Bursch quitted Ratisbon, with the sound of catcalls in his ears, the condemned "Tragedy, *Banise*," in his pocket; and fled southward, on a thin travelling-tutorship; — since Rousseau met you, Herr Grimm, "a young man described as seeking a situation, and whose appearance indicated the pressing necessity he was in of soon finding one!" Of a truth, you have flourished since then, Herr Grimm: his introductions of you to Diderot, to Holbach, to the black-locked D'Epinay, where not only you are wormed in, but he is wormed out, have turned to somewhat; the Threadbare has become well-napped, and got ruffles and jewel-rings, and walks abroad in sword and bag-wig, and lacquers his brass countenance with rouge, and so (as *Tyran le Blanc*) recommends himself to the fair; and writes Parisian Philosophe-gossip to the Hyperborean Kings, and his "Grimm's Leaves," copied "to the number of twenty," are bread of life to many; and cringes here, and domineers there; and lives at his ease in the Creation, in an effective *tendresse* with the D'Epinay, husband or custom of the country not objecting! — Poor Börne, the new German Flying-Sansculotte, feels his mouth water, at Paris, over these flesh-pots of Grimm: reflecting with what heart he too could write "Leaves," and be fed thereby. Börne, my friend, those days are done! While Northern Courts were a "Lunar Versailles," it was well to have an Uriel stationed in their Sun there; but of all spots in this Universe (hardly excepting Tophet) Paris now is the one we at court could best *dispense* with news from; never more, in these centuries, will a Grimm be missioned thither; never a "Leaf of Börne" be blown court-wards by any wind. As for the Grimm, we can see that he was a man made to rise in the world: a fair, even handsome outfit of talent, wholly marketable; skill in music, and the like, encyclopedical readiness in all ephemera; saloon-wit, a trenchant, unhesitating head; above all, a heart ever in the right place, — in the market-place, namely, and marked "for sale to the highest bidder." Really a methodical, adroit, managing man. By "hero-worship," and the cunning appliance of alternate sweet and sullen, he has brought Diderot to be his patient milk-cow, whom he can milk an Essay from, a Volume from, when he lists. Victorious Grimm! He even escaped those same "horrors of the French

Revolution" (with loss of his ruffles); and was seen at the Court of Gotha, sleek and well to live, within the memory of man.

The world has heard of M. le Chevalier de Saint-Lambert; considerable in Literature, in Love and War. He is here again, singing the frostiest Pastorals; happily, however, only in the distance, and the jingle of his wires soon dies away. Of another Chevalier, worthy Jaucourt, be the name mentioned, and little more: he digs unweariedly, molewise, in the Encyclopedic field, catching what he can, and shuns the light. Then there is Helvetius, the well-fed Farmer-general, enlivening his sybaritic life with metaphysic paradoxes. His revelations *De l'Homme* and *De l'Esprit* breathe the freest Philosophe-spirit, with Philanthropy and Sensibility enough: the greater is our astonishment to find him here so ardent a Preserver of the Game: —

"This Madame de Nocé," writes Diderot, treating of the Bourbonne Hot-springs, "is a neighbor of Helvetius. She told us, the Philosopher was the unhappiest man in the world on his estates. He is surrounded there by neighbors and peasants who detest him. They break the windows of his mansion, plunder his grounds by night, cut his trees, throw down his walls, tear up his spiked paling. He dare not go to shoot a hare, without a train of people to guard him. You will ask me, How it has come to pass? By a boundless zeal for his game. M. Fagon, his predecessor, used to guard the grounds with two keepers and two guns. Helvetius has twenty-four, and cannot do it. These men have a small premium for every poacher they can catch; and there is no sort of mischief they will not cause to get more and more of these. Besides, they are themselves so many hired poachers. Again, the border of his woods was inhabited by a set of poor people, who had got huts there; he has caused all the huts to be swept away. It is these, and such acts of repeated tyranny, that have raised him enemies of all kinds; and the more insolent, says Madame de Nocé, as they have discovered that the worthy Philosopher is a coward. I would not have his fine estate of Voré as a present, had I to live there in these perpetual alarms. What profits he draws from that mode of management I know not: but he is alone there; he is hated, he is in fear. Ah! how much wiser was our Lady Geoffrin; when speaking of a lawsuit that tormented her, she said to me, 'Get done with my lawsuit; they want money? I have it. Give them money. What better use can I make of my money than to buy peace with it?' In Helvetius's place, I would have said, 'They kill me a few hares and rabbits; let them be doing. These poor creatures have no shelter but my forest; let them stay there.' I should have reasoned like M. Fagon, and been adored like him."

Alas! are not Helvetius's preserves, at this hour, all broken up, and lying desecrated? Neither can the others, in what latitude and longitude soever, remain eternally impregnable. But if a Rome was once saved by geese, need we wonder that an England is lost by partridges? We are sons of Eve, who bartered Paradise for an apple.

But to return to Paris and its Philosophe Church-militant. Here is a Marmontel, an active subaltern thereof, who fights in a small way, through the *Mercure;* and, in rose-pink romance-pictures, strives to celebrate the "moral sublime." An Abbé Morellet, busy with the Corn-Laws, walks in at intervals, stooping, shrunk together, "as if to get nearer himself, *pour être plus près de lui-même.*" The rogue Galiani alternates between Naples and Paris; Galiani, by good luck, has "forever *settled* the question of the Corn-Laws:" an idle fellow otherwise; a spiritual Lazzarone; full of frolics, wanton quips, anti-jesuit *gesta*, and wild Italian humor; the sight of his swart, sharp face is the signal for Laughter, — in which, indeed, the Man himself has unhappily evaporated, leaving no result behind him.

Of the Baron d'Holbach thus much may be said, that both at Paris and at Grandval he gives good dinners. His two or three score volumes of Atheistic Philosophism, which he published (at his own expense), may now be forgotten and even forgiven. A purse open and deep, a heart kindly disposed, quiet, sociable, or even friendly: these, with excellent wines, gain him a literary elevation, which no thinking faculty he had could have pretended to. An easy, laconic gentleman; of grave politeness; apt to lose temper at play; yet, on the whole, good-humored, eupeptic and eupractic: there may he live, and let live.

Nor is heaven's last gift to man wanting here; the natural sovereignty of women. Your Châtelets, Epinays, Espinasses, Geoffrins, Deffands, will play their part too: there shall, in all senses, be not only Philosophes, but Philosophesses. Strange enough is the figure these women make: good souls, it was a strange world for them. What with metaphysics and flirtation, system of nature, fashion of dress-caps, vanity, curiosity, jealousy, atheism, rheumatism, *traités*, *bouts-rimés*, noble-sentiments, and rouge-pots, — the vehement female intellect sees itself sailing on a chaos, where a wiser might have wavered, if not foundered. For the rest (as an accurate observer has remarked), they become a sort of Lady-Presidents in that society; attain great influence; and, imparting as well as receiving, communicate to all that is done or said somewhat of their own peculiar tone.

In a world so wide and multifarious, this little band of Philosophes, acting and speaking as they did, had a most various reception to expect; votes divided to the uttermost. The mass of mankind, busy enough with their own work, of course heeded them only when forced to do it; these, meanwhile, form the great neutral element, in which the battle has to fight itself; the two hosts, according to their several success, to recruit themselves. Of the Higher Classes, it appears, the small proportion not wholly occupied in eating and dressing, and therefore open to such a question, are in their favor, — strange as to us it may seem; the spectacle of a Church pulled down is, in stagnant times, amusing; nor do the generality, on either side, yet see whither ulteriorly it is tending. The Reading World, which was then more than now the intelligent, inquiring world, reads eagerly (as it will ever do) whatsoever skilful, sprightly, reasonable-looking word is written for it; enjoying, appropriating the same; perhaps without fixed judgment, or deep care of any kind. Careful enough, fixed enough, on the other hand, is the Jesuit Brotherhood; in these days sick unto death; but only the bitterer and angrier for that. Dangerous are the death-convulsions of an expiring Sorbonne, ever and anon filling Paris with agitation: it behooves your Philosophe to walk warily, and in many a critical circumstance, to weep with the one cheek, and smile with the other.

Nor is Literature itself wholly Philosophe; apart from the Jesuit regulars, in their Trevoux Journals, Sermons, Episcopal Charges, and other camps or casemates, a considerable Guerilla or Reviewer force (consisting, as usual, of smugglers, unemployed destitute persons, deserters who have been refused promotion, and other the like broken characters), has organized itself, and maintains a harassing bush-warfare: of these the chieftain is Fréron, once in tolerable repute with the world, had he not, carrying too high a head, struck his foot on stones, and stumbled. By the continual depreciating of talent grown at length undeniable, he has sunk low enough: Voltaire, in the *Ecossaise*, can bring him on the stage, and have him killed by laughter, under the name, sufficiently recognizable, of *Wasp* (in French, *Frelon*). Another Empecedor, still more hateful, is Palissot, who has written and got acted a Comedy of *Les Philosophes*, at which the Parisians, spite of its dulness, have also laughed. To laugh at *us*, the so meritorious us! Heard mankind ever the like? For poor Palissot, had he fallen into Philosophe hands, serious bodily tar-and-feathering might have been apprehended: as it was, they do what the pen, with its gall and copperas, can; invoke Heaven and Earth to witness the treatment of Divine Philosophy; — with which view, in particular, friend Diderot seems to have composed his *Rameau's Nephew*, wherein Palissot and others of his kidney are (figuratively speaking) mauled and mangled, and left not in dog's likeness. So divided was the world, Literary, Courtly, Miscellaneous, on this matter: it was a confused anomalous time.

Among its more notable anomalies may be reckoned the relations of French Philosophism to Foreign Crowned Heads. In Prussia there is a Philosophe King; in Russia a Philosophe Empress: the whole North swarms with kinglets and queenlets of the like temper. Nay, as we have seen, they entertain their special ambassador in Philosophedom, their lion's-provider to furnish spiritual Philosophe-provender; and pay him well. The great Frederic, the great Catherine are as nursing-father and nursing-mother to this new Church of Antichrist; in all straits, ready with money, honorable royal asylum, help of every sort, — which, however, except in the money-shape, the wiser of our Philosophes are shy of receiving. Voltaire had tried it in the asylum-shape, and found it unsuitable; D'Alembert and Diderot decline repeating the experiment. What miracles are wrought by the arch-magician Time! Could these Frederics, Catherines, Josephs, have looked forward some threescore years; and beheld the Holy Alliance in conference at Laybach! But so goes the world: kings are not seraphic doctors, with gift of prescience, but only men, with common eyesight, participating in the influences of their generation: kings too, like all mortals, have a certain love of knowledge; still more infallibly, a certain desire of applause; a certain delight in mortifying one another. Thus what is persecuted here finds refuge there; and ever, one way or other, the New works itself out full-formed from under the Old; nay the Old, as in this instance, sits sedulously hatching a cockatrice that will one day devour it.

No less anomalous, confused and contradictory is the relation of the Philosophes to their own Government. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, their relation to Society being still so undecided; and the Government, which might have endeavored to adjust and preside over this, being itself in a state of anomaly, death-lethargy, and doting decrepitude? The true conduct and position for a French Sovereign towards French Literature, in that country might have been, though perhaps of all things the most important, one of the most difficult to discover and accomplish. What chance was there that a thick-blooded Louis Quinze, from his *Parc aux Cerfs*, should discover it, should have the faintest inkling of it? His "peaceable soul" was quite otherwise employed: Minister after Minister must consult his own several insight, his own whim, above all his own ease: and so the whole business, now when we look on it, comes out one of the most botched, piebald, inconsistent, lamentable and even ludicrous objects in the history of State-craft. Alas, necessity has no *law:* the statesman, without light, perhaps even without eyes, whom Destiny nevertheless constrains to "govern" his nation in a time of World-Downfall, what shall he do, but if so may be, collect the taxes; prevent in some degree murder and arson; and for the rest, wriggle hither and thither, return upon his steps, clout up old rents and open new, — and, on the whole, eat his victuals, and let the Devil govern it? Of the pass to which Statesmanship had come in respect of Philosophism, let this one fact be evidence instead of a thousand. M. de Malesherbes writes to warn Diderot that, next day, he will give orders to have all his papers seized. — Impossible! answers Diderot: *juste ciel!* how shall I sort them, where shall I hide them, within four-and-twenty hours? *Send them to me*, answers M. de Malesherbes! Thither accordingly they go, under lock and seal; and the hungry catchpoles find nothing but empty drawers.

The *Encyclopédie* was set forth first "with approbation and *Privilége du Roi;*" next, it was stopped by Authority: next, the public murmuring, suffered to proceed; then again, positively for the last time, stopped, — and, no whit the less, printed, and written, and circulated, under thin disguises, some hundred and fifty printers working at it with open doors, all Paris knowing of it, only Authority winking hard. Choiseul, in his resolute way, had now shut the eyes of Authority, and kept them shut. Finally, to crown the whole matter, a copy of the prohibited Book lies in the King's private library: and owes favor, and a withdrawal of the prohibition, to the foolishest accident: —

"One of Louis Fifteenth's domestics told me," says Voltaire, "that once, the King his master supping, in private circle (*en petite compagnie*), at Trianon, the conversation turned first on the chase, and from this on gunpowder. Some one said that the best powder was made of sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal, in equal parts. The Duc de la Vallière, with better knowledge, maintained that for good powder there must be one part of sulphur, one of charcoal, with five of saltpetre, well filtered, well evaporated, well crystallized.

"'It is pleasant,' said the Duc de Nivernois, 'that we who daily amuse ourselves with killing partridges in the Park of Versailles, and sometimes with killing men, or getting ourselves killed, on the frontiers, should not know what that same work of killing is done with.'

"'Alas! we are in the like case with all things in this world,' answered Madame de Pompadour: 'I know not what the rouge I put upon my cheeks is made of; you would bring me to a nonplus, if you asked how the silk hose I wear are manufactured.' ''T is a pity,' said the Duc de la Vallière, 'that his Majesty confiscated our *Dictionnaires Encyclopédiques,* which cost us our hundred pistoles; we should soon find the decision of all our questions there.' The King justified the act of confiscation; he had been informed that these twenty-one folio volumes, to be found lying on all ladies' toilettes, were the most pernicious things in the world for the kingdom of France; he had resolved to look for himself if this were true, before suffering the book to circulate. Towards the end of the repast, he sends three of his valets to bring him a copy; they enter, struggling under seven volumes each. The article *powder* is turned up; the Duc de la Vallière is found to be right: and soon Madame de Pompadour learns the difference between the old *rouge d'Espagne* with which the ladies of Madrid colored their cheeks, and the *rouge des dames* of Paris. She finds that the Greek and Roman ladies painted with a purple extracted from the *murex,* and that consequently our scarlet is the purple of the ancients; and that there is more purple in the *rouge d'Espagne,* and more cochineal in that of France. She learns how stockings are woven; the stocking-frame described there fills her with amazement. 'Ah, what a glorious book!' cried she. 'Sire, did you confiscate this magazine of all useful things, that you might have it wholly to yourself, then, and be the one learned man in your kingdom?' Each threw himself on the volumes, like the daughters of Lycomedes on the jewels of Ulysses; each found forthwith whatever he was seeking. Some who had lawsuits were surprised to see the decision of them there. The King reads there all the rights of his crown. 'Well, in truth (*mais vraiment*),' said he, 'I know not why they said so much ill of the book.' 'Ah, sire,' said the Duc de Nivernois, 'does not your Majesty see,' &c. &c."

In such a confused world, under such unheard-of circumstances, must friend Diderot ply his editorial labors. No sinecure is it! Penetrating into all subjects and sciences; waiting and rummaging in all libraries, laboratories; nay, for many years, fearlessly diving into all manner of workshops, unscrewing stocking-looms, and even working thereon (that the department of *Arts and Trades* might be perfect); then seeking out contributors, and flattering them, quickening their laziness, getting payment for them; quarrelling with Bookseller and Printer: bearing all miscalculations, misfortunes, misdoings of so many fallible men (for there all at last lands) on his single back: surely this was enough, without having farther to do battle with the beagles of Office, perilously withstand them, expensively sop them, toilsomely elude them! Nevertheless, he perseveres, and will not but persevere; — less, perhaps, with the deliberate courage of a Man, who has compared result and outlay, than with the passionate obstinacy of a Woman, who, having made up her mind, will shrink at no ladder of ropes, but ride with her lover, though all the four Elements gainsay it. At every new concussion from the Powers, he roars; say rather, shrieks, for there is a female shrillness in it; proclaiming, Murder! Robbery! Rape! invoking men and angels; meanwhile proceeds unweariedly with the printing. It is a hostile building up, not of the Holy Temple at Jerusalem, but of the Unholy one at Paris: thus must Diderot, like Ezra, come to strange extremities; and every workman works with his trowel in one hand, in the other his weapon of war; that so, in spite of all Tiglaths, the work go on, and the topstone of it be brought out with shouting.

Shouting! Ah, what faint broken quaver is that in the shout; as of a man that shouted with the throat only, and inwardly was bowed down with dispiritment? It is Diderot's faint broken quaver; he is sick and heavy of soul. Scandalous enough: the Goth Lebreton, loving, as he says, his head better even than his profit, has for years gone privily at dead of night to the finished Encyclopedic proof-sheets, and there with nefarious pen scratched out whatever to *him* seemed dangerous; filling up the gap as *he* could, or merely letting it fill itself up. Heaven and Earth! Not only are the finer Philosophe sallies mostly cut out, — but hereby has the work become a sunken, hitching, ungainly mass, little better than a monstrosity. Goth! Hun! sacrilegious Attila of the book-trade! Oh, surely for this treason the hottest of Dante's Purgatory were too temperate. Infamous art thou, Lebreton, to all ages — that read the *Encyclopédie;* and Philosophes not yet in swaddling-clothes shall gnash their teeth over thee, and spit upon thy memory. — Lebreton pockets both the abuse and the cash, and sleeps sound in a whole skin. The able Editor could never be said to get entirely the better of it while he lived.

Now, however, it is time that, quitting generalities, we go, in this fine autumn weather, to Holbach's at Grandval, where the hard-worked but unwearied Encyclopedist, with plenty of ink and writing-paper, is sure to be. Ever in the Holbach household his arrival is a holyday; if a quarrel spring up, it is only because he will not come, or too soon goes away. A man of social talent, with such a tongue as Diderot's, in a mansion where the only want to be guarded against was that of wit, could not be other than welcome. He composes Articles there, and walks, and dines, and plays cards, and talks; languishingly waits letters from his Voland, copiously writes to her. It is in these copious love-despatches that the whole matter is so graphically painted: we have an Asmodeus' view of the interior life there, and live it over again with him. The Baroness, in red silk tempered with snow-white gauze, is beauty and grace itself; her old Mother is a perfect romp of fifteen, or younger; the house is lively with company; the Baron, as we said, speaks little, but to the purpose; is seen sometimes with his pipe, in dressing-gown and red slippers; otherwise the best of landlords. Remarkable figures drop in; generals disabled at Quebec; fashionable gentlemen rusticating in the neighborhood; Abbés, such as Galiani, Raynal, Morellet; perhaps Grimm and his Epinay; other Philosophes and Philosophesses. Guests too of less dignity, acting rather as butts than as bowmen: for it is the part of every one either to have wit, or to be the cause of having it.

Among these latter, omitting many, there is one whom, for country's sake, we must particularize; an ancient personage, named Hoop (Hope), whom they called *Père* Hoop; by birth a Scotchman. Hoop seems to be a sort of fixture at Grandval, not bowman, therefore butt; and is shot at for his lodging. A most shrivelled, wind-dried, dyspeptic, chill-shivering individual; Professor of Life-weariness; sits dozing there, — dozes there, however, with one eye open. He submits to be called *Mummy,* without a shrug; cowers over the fire, at the warmest corner. Yet is there a certain sardonic subacidity in Père Hoop; when he slowly unlocks his leathern jaw, we hear him with a sort of pleasure. Hoop has been in various countries and situations; in that croaking metallic voice of his, can tell a distinct story. Diderot apprehended he would one day hang himself: if so, what Museum now holds his remains? The Parent Hoops, it would seem, still dwelt in the city of Edinburgh; he, the second son, as Bordeaux Merchant, having helped them thither, out of some proud Manorhouse no longer weather-tight. Can any ancient person of that city give us trace of such a man? It must be inquired into. One only of Father Hoop's reminiscences we shall report, as the highest instance on record of a national virtue: At the battle of Prestonpans, a kinsman of Hoop's, a gentleman with gold rings on his fingers, stands fighting and fencing for life with a rough Highlander; the Highlander, by some clever stroke, whisks the jewelled hand clear off, and then — picks it up from the ground, sticks it in his sporran for future leisure, and fights on! The force of *vertue*[1] could no farther go.

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[1] *Virtus* (properly *man*liness, the chief duty of man) meant, in old Rome, *power of fighting;* means, in modern Rome, *connoisseurship;* in Scotland, *thrift.* — Ed.

It cannot be uninteresting to the general reader to learn, that in the last days of October, in the year of grace 1770, Denis Diderot over-ate himself (as he was in the habit of doing), at Grandval; and had an obstinate "indigestion of bread." He writes to Grimm that it is the worst of all indigestions: to his fair Voland that it lay more than fifteen hours on his stomach, with a weight like to crush the life out of him; would neither *remonter* nor *descendre;* nor indeed stir a hair's-breadth for warm water, *de quelque côté que je la* (the warm water) *prisse.*

Clysterium donare,
Ensuita purgare!

Such things, we grieve to say, are of frequent occurrence; the Holbachian table is all too plenteous; there are cooks too, we know, who boast of their diabolic ability to cause the patient, by successive intensations of their art, to eat with new and ever-new appetite, till he explode on the spot. Diderot writes to his fair one, that his clothes will hardly button, that he is thus "stuffed" and thus; and so indigestion succeeds indigestion. Such Narratives fill the heart of sensibility with amazement; nor to the woes that checker this imperfect, caco-gastric state of existence is the tear wanting.

The society of Grandval cannot be accounted very dull: nevertheless let no man regretfully compare it with any neighborhood he may have drawn by lot, in the present day; or even with any no-neighborhood, if that be his affliction. The gayety at Grandval was of the kind that could not last. Were it not that some Belief is left in Mankind, how could the sport of emitting Unbelief continue? On which ground indeed, Swift, in his masterly argument "Against abolishing the Christian Religion," urges, not without pathos, that innumerable men of wit, enjoying a comfortable status by virtue of jokes on the Catechism, would hereby be left without pabulum, the staff of life cut away from their hand. The Holbachs were blind to this consideration; and joked away, as if it would last forever. So too with regard to Obscene Talk: where were the merit of a riotous Mother-in-law saying and doing, in public, these never-imagined scandals, had not a cunningly devised fable of Modesty been set afloat; were there not some remnants of Modesty still extant among the unphilosophic classes? The Samoeids (according to Travellers) have few double-meanings; among stall-cattle the witty effect of such is lost altogether. Be advised, then, foolish old woman! "Burn not thy bed;" the light of *it* will soon go out, and then? — Apart from the common household topics, which the "daily household epochs" bring with them everywhere, two main elements, we regret to say, come to light in the conversation at Grandval; these, with a spicing of Noble-sentiment, are, unfortunately, Blasphemy and Bawdry. Whereby, at this distance, the whole matter grows to look poor and effete; and we can honestly rejoice that it all *has* been, and need not be again.

But now, hastening back to Paris, friend Diderot finds proof-sheets enough on his desk, and notes, and invitations, and applications from distressed men of letters; nevertheless runs over, in the first place, to seek news from the Voland; will then see what is to be done. He writes much; talks and visits much: besides the Savans, Artists, spiritual Notabilities, domestic or migratory, of the period, he has a liberal allowance of unnotable Associates; especially a whole bevy of young or oldish, mostly rather spiteful Women; in whose gossip he is perfect. We hear the rustling of their silks, the clack of their pretty tongues, tittle-tattle "like their pattens when they walk;" and the sound of it, fresh as yesterday, through this long vista of Time, has become significant, almost prophetic. Life could not hang heavy on Diderot's hands: he is a vivid, open, all-embracing creature; could have found occupation anywhere; has occupation here forced on him, enough and to spare. "He had much to do, and did much of his own," says Mademoiselle; "yet three-fourths of his life were employed in helping whosoever had need of his purse, of his talents, of his management: his study, for the five-and-twenty years I knew it, was like a well-frequented shop, where, as one customer went, another came." He could not find in his heart to refuse any one. He has reconciled Brothers, sought out Tutorages, settled Lawsuits; solicited

Pensions; advised, and refreshed hungry Authors, instructed ignorant ones: he has written advertisements for incipient helpless Grocers; he once wrote the dedication (to a pious Duc d'Orléans) of a lampoon against himself, — and so raised some five-and-twenty gold louis for the famishing lampooner. For all these things, let not the light Diderot want his reward with us! Other reward, except from himself, he got none; but often the reverse; as in his little Drama, *La Pièce et le Prologue*, may be seen humorously and good-humoredly set forth under his own hand. Indeed, his clients, by a vast majority, were of the scoundrel species; in any case, Denis knew well, that to expect gratitude, is to deserve ingratitude. — "Rivière well contented [hear Mademoiselle] now thanks my father, both for his services and his advices; sits chatting another quarter of an hour, and then takes leave; my father shows him down. As they are on the stairs, Rivière stops, turns round, and asks: 'M. Diderot, are you acquainted with Natural History?' — 'Why, a little; I know an aloe from a sago, a pigeon from a colibri.' — 'Do you know the history of the *Formica-leo?*' — 'No.' — 'It is a little insect of great industry: it digs a hole in the ground like a reversed funnel; covers the top with fine light sand; entices foolish insects to it; takes them, sucks them, then says to them: M. Diderot, I have the honor to wish you good-day.' My father stood laughing like to split at this adventure."

Thus, amid labor and recreation; questionable Literature, unquestionable Loves; eating and digesting, better or worse; in gladness and vexation of spirit, in laughter ending in sighs, does Diderot pass his days. He has been hard toiled, but then well flattered, and is nothing of a hypochondriac. What little service renown can do him, may now be considered as done: he is in the centre of the literature, science, art, of his nation; not numbered among the Academical Forty, yet in his heterodox heart entitled to be almost proud of the exclusion; successful in Criticism, successful in Philosophism, nay, highest of sublunary glories, successful in the Theatre; vanity may whisper, if she please, that, excepting the unattainable Voltaire alone, he is the first of Frenchmen. High heads are in correspondence with him the low-born; from Catherine the Empress to Philidor the Chess-player, he is in honored relation with all manner of men; with scientific Buffons, Eulers, D'Alemberts; with artistic Falconnets, Vanloos, Riccobonis, Garricks. He was ambitious of being a Philosophe; and now the whole fast-growing sect of Philosophes look up to him as their head and mystagogue. To Denis Diderot, when he stept out of the Langres Diligence at the College d'Harcourt; or afterwards, when he walked in the subterranean shades of Rascaldom, with uneasy steps over the burning marl, a much smaller destiny would have seemed desirable.

Within doors, again, matters stand rather disjointed, as surely they might well do: however, Madame Diderot is always true and assiduous; if one Daughter talk enthusiastically, and at length (though her father has written the *Religieuse*) die mad in a convent, the other, a quick, intelligent, graceful girl, is waxing into womanhood, and takes after the father's Philosophism, leaving the mother's Piety far enough aside. To which elements of mixed good and evil from without, add this so incalculably favorable one from within, that of all literary men Diderot is the least a self-listener; none of your puzzling, repenting, forecasting, earnest-bilious temperaments, but sanguineous-lymphatic every fibre of him, living lightly from hand to mouth, in a world mostly painted rose-color.

The *Encyclopédie*, after nigh thirty years of endeavor, to which only the Siege of Troy may offer some faint parallel, is finished. Scattered Compositions of all sorts, printed or manuscript, making many Volumes, lie also finished; the Philosophe has reaped no golden harvest from them. He is getting old: can live out of debt, but is still poor. Thinking to settle his daughter in marriage, he must resolve to sell his Library: money is not otherwise to be raised. Here, however, the Northern Cleopatra steps imperially forward; purchases his Library for its full value; gives him a handsome pension, as Librarian to keep it for her; and pays him moreover fifty years thereof by advance in ready-money. This we call imperial (in a world so necessitous as ours), though the whole munificence did not, we find, cost above three thousand pounds; a trifle to the Empress of All the Russias. In fact, it is about the sum your first-rate king eats, as board-wages, in one day; who, however, has seldom sufficient; not to speak of charitable overplus. In admiration of his Empress, the vivid Philosophe is now louder than ever; he even breaks forth into rather husky singing. Who shall blame him? The Northern Cleopatra (whom, in any case, he must regard with other eyes than we) has stretched out a generous helping hand to him, where otherwise there was no help, but only hindrance and injury: all men will, and should, more or less, obey the proverb, to praise the fair as their own market goes in it.

One of the last great scenes in Diderot's Life is his personal visit to this Benefactress. There is but one Letter from him with Petersburg for date, and that of ominous brevity. The Philosophe was of open, unheedful, free-and-easy disposition; Prince and Polisson were singularly alike to him; it was "hail fellow well met," with every Son of Adam, be his clothes of one stuff or the other. Such a man could be no court-sycophant, was ill-calculated to succeed at court. We can imagine that the Neva-colic, and the character of the Neva-water, were not the only things hurtful to his nerves there. For King Denis, who had dictated such wonderful anti-regalities in the Abbé Raynal's *History;*[1] and himself, in a moment of sibylism, emitted that surprising announcement, surpassing all yet uttered or utterable in the Tyrtæan way, how

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[1] "But who *dare* stand for this?" would Diderot exclaim. "I will, I!" eagerly responded the Abbé: "do but proceed." (*A la Mémoire de Diderot*, by De Meister.) — Was the following one of the passages?

"Happily these perverse instructors" of Kings "are chastised, sooner or later, by the ingratitude and contempt of their pupils. Happily, these pupils too, miserable in the bosom of grandeur, are tormented all their life by a deep *ennui*, which they cannot banish from their palaces. Happily, the religious prejudices, which have been planted in their souls, return on them to affright them. Happily, the mournful silence of their people teaches them, from time to time, the deep hatred that is borne them. Happily, they are too cowardly to despise that hatred. Happily (*heureusement*), after a life which no mortal, not even the meanest of their subjects, would accept, if he knew all its wretchedness, they find black inquietude, terror and despair, seated on the pillow of their death-bed (*les noires inquiétudes, la terreur et le désespoir assis au chevet de leur lit de mort*)." — Surely, "kings have poor times of it, to be run foul of by the like of thee"!

> "*Ses mains* (the freeman's) *ourderaient les entrailles du prêtre,*
> *Au défaut d'un cordon, pour étrangler les rois ;*"

for such a one, the climate of the Neva must have had something oppressive in it. The *entrailles du prêtre* were, indeed, much at his service here, could he get clutch of them; but only for musical philosophe fiddle-strings; nowise for a *cordon!*

Nevertheless, Cleopatra is an uncommon woman (or rather an uncommon man), and can put up with many things; and, in a gentle skilful way, make the crooked straight. As her Philosophe presents himself in common apparel, she sends him a splendid court-suit; and as he can now enter in a civilized manner, she sees him often, confers with him largely: by happy chance, Grimm too at length arrives; and the winter passes without accident. Returning home in triumph, he can express himself contented, charmed with his reception; has mineral specimens, and all manner of hyperborean memorials for friends; unheard-of things to tell; how he crossed the bottomless half-thawed Dwina, with the water boiling up round his wheels, the ice bending like leather, yet crackling like mere ice, — and shuddered, and got through safe; how he was carried, coach and all, into the ferry-boat at Mittau, on thirty wild men's backs, who floundered in the mud, and nigh broke his shoulder-blade; how he investigated Holland, and had conversed with Empresses, and High Mightinesses, and principalities and powers; and so seen and conquered, for his own spiritual behoof, several of the Seven Wonders.

But, alas! his health is broken; old age is knocking at the gate, like an importunate creditor, who has warrant for entering. The radiant lightly bounding soul is now getting all dim and stiff, and heavy with sleep; Diderot too must adjust himself, for the hour draws nigh. These last years he passes retired and private, not idle or miserable. Philosophy or

Philosophism has nowise lost its charm; whatsoever so much as calls itself Philosopher can interest him. Thus poor Seneca, on occasion of some new Version of his Works, having come before the public, and been roughly dealt with, Diderot, with a long, last, concentrated effort, writes his *Vie de Sénèque;* struggling to make the hollow solid. Which, alas, after all his tinkering still sounds hollow; and notable Seneca, so wistfully desirous to stand well with Truth, and yet not ill with Nero, is and remains only our perhaps niceliest-proportioned Half-and-half, the plausiblest Plausible on record; no great man, no true man, no man at all; yet how much lovelier than such, — as the mild-spoken, tolerating, charity-sermoning, immaculate Bishop Dogbolt to some rude, self-helping, sharp-tongued Apostle Paul! Under which view, indeed, Seneca (though surely erroneously, for the origin of the thing was different) has been called, in this generation, "the father of all such as wear shovel-hats."

The *Vie de Sénèque*, as we said, was Diderot's last effort. It remains only to be added of him, that he too died; a lingering but quiet death, which took place on the 30th of July, 1784. He once quotes from Montaigne the following, as Sceptic's viaticum: "I plunge stupidly, head foremost, into this dumb Deep, which swallows me, and chokes me, in a moment, — full of insipidity and indolence. Death, which is but a quarter of an hour's suffering, without consequence and without injury, does not require peculiar precepts." It was Diderot's allotment to die with all due "stupidity:" he was leaning on his elbows; had eaten an apricot two minutes before, and answered his wife's remonstrances with: "*Mais que diable de mal veux-tu que cela me fasse?* (How the deuce can that hurt me?)" She spoke again, and he answered not. His House, which the curious will visit when they go to Paris, was in the Rue Taranne, at the intersection thereof with the Rue Saint-Benoît. The dust that was once his Body went to mingle with the common earth, in the church of Saint-Roch; his Life, the wondrous manifold Force that was in him, that was He, — returned to ETERNITY, and *is* there, and continues there!

Two things, as we saw, are celebrated of Diderot. First, that he had the most encyclopedical head ever seen in this world: second, that he talked as never man talked; — properly, as never man his admirers had heard, or as no man living in Paris then. That is to say, his was at once the widest, fertilest, and readiest of minds.

With regard to the Encyclopedical Head, suppose it to mean that he was of such vivacity as to admit, and look upon with interest, almost all things which the circle of Existence could offer him; in which sense, this exaggerated laudation, of Encyclopedism, is not without its fraction of meaning. Of extraordinary openness and compass we must grant the mind of Diderot to be; of a susceptibility, quick activity; even naturally of a depth, and in its practical realized shape, of a universality, which bring it into kindred with the highest order of minds. On all forms of this wondrous Creation he can look with loving wonder; whatsoever thing stands there, has some brotherhood with him, some beauty and meaning for him. Neither is the faculty to see and interpret wanting; as, indeed, this faculty to *see* is inseparable from that other faculty to *look*, from that true wish to look; moreover (under another figure), Intellect is not a *tool*, but a *hand* that can handle any tool. Nay, in Diderot we may discern a far deeper universality than that shown, or showable, in Lebreton's *Encyclopédie;* namely, a poetical; for, in slight gleams, this too manifests itself. A universality less of the head than of the character; such, we say, is traceable in this man, at lowest the power to have acquired such. Your true Encyclopedical is the Homer, the Shakspeare; every genuine Poet is a living embodied, real Encyclopædia, — in more or fewer volumes; were his experience, his insight of details, never so limited, the whole world lies imaged as a whole within him; whosoever has not seized the whole cannot yet speak truly (much less can he speak *musically*, which is harmoniously, *concordantly*) of any part, but will perpetually need new guidance, rectification. The fit use of such a man is as hodman; not feeling the plan of the edifice, let him carry stones to it; if he *build* the smallest stone, it is likeliest to be wrong, and cannot continue there.

But the truth is, as regards Diderot, this saying of the encyclopedical head comes mainly from his having edited a Bookseller's Encyclopædia, and can afford us little direction. Looking into the man, and omitting his trade, we find him by nature gifted in a high degree with openness and versatility, yet nowise in the highest degree; alas, in quite another degree than that. Nay, if it be meant farther that in practice, as a writer and thinker, he has taken in the Appearances of Life and the World, and images them back with such freedom, clearness, fidelity, as we have not many times witnessed elsewhere, as we have not various times seen infinitely surpassed elsewhere, — this same encyclopedical praise must altogether be denied him. Diderot's habitual world, we must, on the contrary, say, is a half-world, distorted into looking like a whole; it is properly, a poor, fractional, insignificant world; partial, inaccurate, perverted from end to end. Alas, it was the destiny of the man to live as a Polemic; to be born also in the morning-tide and first splendor of the Mechanical Era; not to know, with the smallest assurance or continuance, that in the Universe other than a mechanical meaning could exist; which force of destiny acting on him through his whole course, we have obtained what now stands before us: no Seer, but only possibilities of a Seer, transient irradiations of a Seer, looking through the organs of a Philosophe.

These two considerations, which indeed are properly but one (for a thinker, especially of French birth, in the Mechanical Era, could not be other than a Polemic), must never for a moment be left out of view in judging the works of Diderot. It is a great truth, one side of a great truth, that the Man makes the Circumstances, and spiritually as well as economically is the artificer of his own fortune. But there is another side of the same truth, that the man's circumstances are the element he is appointed to live and work in; that he by necessity takes his complexion, vesture, embodiment, from these, and is in all practical manifestations modified by them almost without limit; so that in another no less genuine sense, it can be said Circumstances make the Man. Now, if it continually behooves us to insist on the former truth towards ourselves, it equally behooves us to bear in mind the latter when we judge of other men. The most gifted soul, appearing in France in the Eighteenth Century, can as little embody himself in the intellectual vesture of an Athenian Plato, as in the grammatical one; his thoughts can no more be Greek, than his language can. He thinks of the things belonging to the French eighteenth century, and in the dialect he has learned there; in the light, and under the conditions prescribed there. Thus, as the most original, resolute and self-directing of all the Moderns has written: "Let a man be but born ten years sooner, or ten years later, his whole aspect and performance shall be different."

Grant, doubtless, that a certain perennial Spirit, true for all times and all countries, can and must look through the thinking of certain men, be it in what dialect soever: understand meanwhile that strictly this holds only of the highest order of men, and cannot be exacted of inferior orders; among whom, if the most sedulous, loving inspection disclose any even secondary symptoms of such a Spirit, it ought to seem enough. Let us remember well that the high-gifted, high-striving Diderot was born in the point of Time and of Space, when of all uses he could turn himself to, of all dialects speak in, this of Polemical Philosophism, and no other, seemed the most promising and fittest. Let us remember too, that no earnest Man, in any Time, ever spoke what was wholly meaningless; that, in all human convictions, much more in all human practices, there was a true side, a fraction of truth; which fraction is precisely the thing we want to extract from them, if we want anything at all to do with them.

Such palliative considerations (which, for the rest, concern not Diderot, now departed, and indifferent to them, but only ourselves who could wish to *see* him, and not to missee him) are essential, we say, through our whole survey of his Opinions and Proceedings, generally so alien to our own; but most of all in reference to his head Opinion, properly the source of all the rest, and more shocking, even horrible, to us than all the rest: we mean his Atheism. David Hume, dining once in company where Diderot was, remarked that he did not think there were any Atheists. "Count us," said a certain Monsieur ——: they were eighteen. "Well," said the Monsieur ——, "it is pretty fair if you have fished out fifteen at the first cast; and three others who know not what to think of it." In fact, the case was common; your Philosophe of the first water had grown to reckon Atheism a necessary accomplishment. Gowkthrapple Naigeon, as we saw, had made himself very perfect therein.

Diderot was an Atheist, then; stranger still, a proselytizing Atheist, who esteemed the creed worth earnest reiterated preaching, and enforcement with all vigor! The unhappy man had "sailed through the Universe of Worlds and found no Maker thereof; had descended to the abysses where Being no longer casts its shadow, and felt only the rain-drops trickle down; and seen only the gleaming rainbow of Creation, which originated from no Sun; and heard only the everlasting storm which no one governs; and looked upwards for the DIVINE EYE, and beheld only the black, bottomless, glaring DEATH'S EYE-SOCKET:" such, with all his wide voyagings, was the philosophic fortune he had realized.

Sad enough, horrible enough: yet instead of shrieking over it, or howling and Ernulphus'-cursing over it, let us, as the more profitable method, keep our composure, and inquire a little, What possibly it may mean? The whole phenomenon, as seems to us, will explain itself from the fact above insisted on, that Diderot was a Polemic of decided character, in the Mechanical Age. With great expenditure of words and froth, in arguments as waste, wild-weltering, delirious-dismal as the chaos they would demonstrate; which arguments one now knows not whether to laugh at or to weep at, and almost does both, — have Diderot and his sect perhaps made this apparent to all who examine it: That in the French System of Thought (called also the Scotch, and still familiar enough everywhere, which for want of a better title we have named the Mechanical), there is no room for a Divinity; that to him, for whom *intellect*, or the power of knowing and believing, is still synonymous with *logic*, or the mere power of arranging and communicating, there is absolutely no proof discoverable of a Divinity; and such a man has nothing for it but either, if he be of half spirit as is the frequent case, to trim despicably all his days between two opinions; or else, if he be of whole spirit, to anchor himself on the rock or quagmire of Atheism, — and farther, should he see fit, proclaim to others that there is good riding there. So much may Diderot have demonstrated: a conclusion at which we nowise turn pale. Was it much to know that Metaphysical Speculation, by nature, whirls round in endless Mahlstroms, both "creating and swallowing — itself"? For so wonderful a self-swallowing product of the Spirit of the Time, could any result to arrive at be fitter than this of the ETERNAL NO? We thank Heaven that the result *is* finally arrived at; and so now we can look out for something other and farther. But above all things, *proof* of a God? A *probable* God! The smallest of Finites struggling to *prove* to itself, that is to say if we will consider it, to picture out and arrange as diagram, and *include* within itself, the Highest Infinite; in *which*, by hypothesis, *it* lives, and moves, and has its being! This, we conjecture, will one day seem a much more miraculous miracle than that negative result it has arrived at, — or any other result a still absurder chance might have led it to. He who, in some singular Time of the World's History, were reduced to wander about, in stooping posture, with painfully constructed sulphur-match and farthing rushlight (as Gowkthrapple Naigeon), or smoky tar-link (as Denis Diderot), searching for the Sun, and did not find it; were *he* wonderful and his failure; or the singular Time, and its having put him on that search?

Two small consequences, then, we fancy, may have followed, or be following, from poor Diderot's Atheism. First, that all speculations of the sort we call Natural Theology, endeavoring to prove the beginning of all Belief by some Belief earlier than the beginning, are barren, ineffectual, impossible; and may, so soon as otherwise it is profitable, be abandoned. Of final causes, man, by the nature of the case, can *prove* nothing; knows them, if he know anything of them, not by glimmering flint-sparks of Logic, but by an infinitely higher light of intuition; never long, by Heaven's mercy, wholly eclipsed in the human soul; and (under the name of Faith, as regards this matter) familiar to us now, historically or in conscious possession, for upwards of four thousand years. To all open men it will indeed always be a favorite contemplation, that of watching the ways of Being, how animate adjusts itself to inanimate, rational to irrational, and this that we name Nature is not a desolate phantasm of a chaos, but a wondrous existence and reality. If, moreover, in those same "marks of design," as he has called them, the contemplative man find new evidence of a designing Maker, be it well for him: meanwhile, surely one would think, the still clearer evidence lay nearer home, — in the contemplative man's own head that *seeks* after such! In which point of view our extant Natural Theologies, as our innumerable Evidences of the Christian Religion, and such like, may, in reference to the strange season they appear in, have a certain value, and be worth printing and reprinting; only let us understand for whom, and how, they are valuable; and be nowise wroth with the poor Atheist, whom they have not convinced, and could not, and should not convince.

The second consequence seems to be, that this whole current hypothesis of the Universe being "a Machine," and then of an Architect, who constructed it, sitting as it were apart, and guiding it, and *seeing* it go, — may turn out an inanity and nonentity; not much longer tenable: with which result likewise we shall, in the quietest manner, reconcile ourselves. "Think ye," says Goethe, "that God made the Universe, and then let it run round his finger (*am Finger laufen liesse*)?" On the whole, that Metaphysical hurly-burly, of our poor jarring, self-listening Time, ought at length to compose itself: that seeking for a God *there*, and not *here*; everywhere outwardly in physical Nature, and not inwardly in our own Soul, where alone He is to be found by us, — begins to get wearisome. Above all, that "faint possible Theism," which now forms our common English creed, cannot be too soon swept out of the world. What is the nature of that individual, who with hysterical violence theoretically asserts a God, perhaps a revealed Symbol and Worship of God; and for the rest, in thought, word and conduct, meet with him where you will, is found living as if his theory were some polite figure of speech, and his theoretical God a mere distant Simulacrum, with whom he, for his part, had nothing farther to do? Fool! The ETERNAL is no Simulacrum; God is not only There, but Here or nowhere, in that life-breath of thine, in that act and thought of thine, — and thou wert wise to look to it. If there is no God, as the fool hath said in his heart, then live on with thy decencies, and lip-homages, and inward greed, and falsehood, and all the hollow cunningly devised halfness that recommends thee to the Mammon of this world: if there *is* a God, we say, look to it! But in either case, what art thou? The Atheist is false; yet is there, as we see, a fraction of truth in him; he is true compared with thee; thou, unhappy mortal, livest wholly in a lie, art wholly a lie.

So that Diderot's Atheism comes, if not to much, yet to something: we learn this from it, and from what it stands connected with, and may represent for us, That the Mechanical System of Thought is, in its essence, Atheistic; that whosoever will admit no organ of truth but logic, and nothing to exist but what can be argued of, must even content himself with this sad result, as the only solid one he can arrive at; and so with the best grace he can, "of the ether make a gas, of God a force, of the second world a coffin;" of man an aimless nondescript, "little better than a kind of vermin." If Diderot, by bringing matters to this parting of the roads, have enabled or helped us to strike into the truer and better road, let him have our thanks for it. As to what remains, be pity our only feeling; was not his creed miserable enough; nay, moreover, did not he bear its miserableness, so to speak, in our stead, so that it need now be no longer borne by any one?

In this same for him unavoidable circumstance, of the age he lived in, and the system of thought universal then, will be found the key to Diderot's whole spiritual character and procedure: the excuse for much in him that to us is false and perverted. Beyond the meagre "rushlight of closet-logic," Diderot recognized no guidance. That "the Highest cannot be spoken of in words," was a truth he had not dreamt of. Whatsoever thing he cannot debate of, we might almost say measure and weigh, and carry off with him to be eaten and enjoyed, is simply not there for him. He dwelt all his days in the "thin rind of the Conscious;" the deep fathomless domain of the Unconscious, whereon the other rests and has its meaning, was not, under any shape, surmised by him. Thus must the Sanctuary of Man's Soul stand perennially shut against this man; where his hand ceased to grope, the World ended: within such strait conditions had he to live and labor. And naturally to distort and dislocate, more or less, all things he labored on: for whosoever, in one way or another, recognizes not that "Divine Idea of the World, which lies at the bottom of Appearances," can rightly interpret no Appearance; and whatsoever spiritual thing he does, must do it partially, do it falsely.

Mournful enough, accordingly, is the account which Diderot has given himself of Man's Existence; on the duties, relations, possessions whereof he had been a sedulous thinker. In every conclusion we have this fact of his Mechanical culture. Coupled too with another fact honorable to him: that he stuck not at half measures; but resolutely drove on to the result, and held by it. So that we cannot call him a Sceptic; he has merited the more decisive name of Denier. He may be said to have denied that there was any the smallest Sacredness in Man, or in the Universe; and to have both speculated and lived on this singular footing. We behold in him the notable extreme of a man guiding himself with the least spiritual Belief that thinking man perhaps ever had. Religion, in all recognizable shapes and senses, he has done what man can do to clear out of him. He believes that pleasure is pleasant; that a lie is unbelievable; and there his *credo* terminates; nay there, what perhaps makes his case almost unique, his very fancy seems to fall silent.

For a consequent man, all possible spiritual perversions are included under that grossest one of "proselytizing Atheism;" the rest, of what kind and degree soever, cannot any longer astonish us. Diderot has them of all kinds and degrees: indeed, we might say, the French Philosophe (take him at his *word*, for inwardly much that was foreign adhered to him, do what he could) has emitted a Scheme of the World, to which all that Oriental Mullah, Bonze or Talapoin have done in that kind is poor and feeble. Omitting his whole unparalleled Cosmogonies and Physiologies; coming to his much milder Tables of the Moral Law, we shall glance here but at one minor external item, the relation between man and man; and at only one branch of this, and with all slightness, the relation of covenants; for example, the most important of these, Marriage.

Diderot has convinced himself, and indeed, as above became plain enough, acts on the conviction, that Marriage, contract it, solemnize it in what way you will, involves a solecism which reduces the amount of it to simple zero. It is a suicidal covenant; annuls itself in the very forming. "Thou makest a vow," says he, twice or thrice, as if the argument were a clencher, "thou makest a vow of eternal constancy under a rock, which is even then crumbling away." True, O Denis! the rock crumbles away: all things are changing; man changes faster than most of them. That, in the mean while, an Unchangeable lies under all this, and looks forth, solemn and benign, through the whole destiny and workings of man, is another truth; which no Mechanical Philosophe, in the dust of his logic-mill, can be expected to grind out for himself. Man changes, and will change: the question then arises, Is it wise in him to tumble forth, in headlong obedience to this love of change: is it so much as possible for him? Among the dualisms of man's wholly dualistic nature, this we might fancy was an observable one: that along with his unceasing tendency to change, there is a no less ineradicable tendency to persevere. Were man only here to change, let him, far from marrying, cease even to hedge in fields, and plough them; before the autumn season, he may have lost the whim of reaping them. Let him return to the nomadic state, and set his house on wheels; nay there too a certain restraint must curb his love of change, or his cattle will perish by incessant driving, without grazing in the intervals. O Denis, what things thou babblest, in thy sleep! How, in this world of perpetual flux, shall man secure himself the smallest foundation, except hereby alone: that he take preassurance of his Fate; that in this and the other high act of his life, his Will, with all solemnity, *abdicate* its right to change; voluntarily become involuntary, and say once for all, Be there then no farther dubitation on it! Nay, the poor unheroic craftsman; that very stocking-weaver, on whose loom thou now as amateur weavest: must not even he do as much, — when he signed his apprentice-indentures? The fool! who had such a relish in himself for all things, for kingship and emperorship; yet made a vow (under a penalty of death by hunger) of eternal constancy to stocking-weaving. Yet otherwise, were no thriving craftsmen possible; only botchers, bunglers, transitory nondescripts; unfed, mostly gallows-feeding. But, on the whole, what feeling it was in the ancient devout deep soul, which of Marriage made *a Sacrament:* this, of all things in the world, is what Denis will think of for æons, without discovering. Unless, perhaps, it were to increase the vestry-fees?

Indeed, it must be granted, nothing yet seen or dreamt of can surpass the liberality of friend Denis as *magister morum;* nay, often our poor Philosophe feels called on, in an age of such Spartan rigor, to step forth into the public Stews, and emit his inspiriting *Macte virtute!* there. Whither let the curious in such matters follow him: we, having work elsewhere, wish him "good journey," — or rather "safe return." Of Diderot's indelicacy and indecency there is for us but little to say. Diderot is not what we call indelicate and indecent; he is utterly unclean, scandalous, shameless, sansculottic-samoeidic. To declare with lyric fury that this is wrong; or with historic calmness, that a pig of sensibility would go distracted did you accuse him of it, may, especially in countries where "indecent exposure" is cognizable at police-offices, be considered superfluous. The only question is one in Natural History: Whence comes it? What may a man, not otherwise without elevation of mind, of kindly character, of immense professed philanthropy, and doubtless of extraordinary insight, mean thereby? To us it is but another illustration of the fearless, all-for-logic, thoroughly consistent, Mechanical Thinker. It coheres well enough with Diderot's theory of man; that there is nothing of sacred either in man or around man; and that chimeras are chimerical. How shall he for whom nothing, that cannot be jargoned of in debating-clubs, exists, have any faintest forecast of the depth, significance, divineness of SILENCE; of the sacredness of "Secrets known to all"?

Nevertheless, Nature is great; and Denis was among her nobler productions. To a soul of his sort something like what we call Conscience could nowise be wanting: the feeling of Moral Relation; of the Infinite character thereof, as the essence and soul of all else that can be felt or known, must needs assert itself in him. Yet how assert itself? An Infinitude to one in whose whole Synopsis of the Universe no Infinite stands marked? Wonderful enough is Diderot's method; and yet not wonderful, for we see it, and have always seen it, daily. Since there is nothing sacred in the Universe, whence this sacredness of what you call Virtue? Whence or how comes it that you, Denis Diderot, *must* not do a wrong thing; could not, without some qualm, speak, for example, one Lie, to gain Mahomet's Paradise with all its houris? There is no resource for it, but to get into that interminable ravelment of Reward and Approval, virtue being its own reward; and assert louder and louder, — contrary to the stern experience of all men, from the Divine Man, expiring with agony of bloody sweat on the accursed tree, down to us two, O reader (if we have ever done one Duty), — that Virtue is synonymous with Pleasure. Alas! was Paul, an Apostle of the Gentiles, virtuous; and was virtue its own reward, when *his* approving conscience told him that he was "the chief of sinners," and if bounded to this life alone, "of all men the most miserable"? Or has that same so sublime Virtue, at bottom, little to do with Pleasure, if with far other things? Are Eudoxia, and Eusebeia, and Euthanasia, and all the rest of them, of small account to Eubosia and Eupepsia; and the pains of any moderately paced Career of Vice, Denis himself being judge, as a drop in the bucket to the "Career of Indigestions"? This is what Denis never in this world will grant.

But what, then, will he do? One of two things: admit, with Grimm, that there are "two justices," — which may be called by many handsome names, but properly are nothing but the pleasant justice, and the unpleasant; whereof only the former is binding! Herein, however, Nature has been unkind to Denis; he is not a literary court-toadeater; but a free, genial, even poetic creature. There remains, therefore, nothing but the second expedient: to "assert louder and louder;" in other words, to become a Philosophe-Sentimentalist. Most wearisome, accordingly, is the perpetual clatter kept up here about *vertu*, *honnêteté*, *grandeur*, *sensibilité*, *âmes nobles;* how unspeakably good it is to be virtuous, how pleasant, how sublime: — In the Devil and his grandmother's name, *be* virtuous; and let us have an end of it! In such sort (we will, nevertheless, joyfully recognize) does great Nature in spite of all contradictions, declare her royalty, her divineness; and, for the poor Mechanical Philosophe, has prepared, since the substance is hidden from him, a shadow wherewith he can be cheered.

In fine, to our ill-starred Mechanical Philosophe-Sentimentalist, with his loud preaching and rather poor performing, shall we not, in various respects, "thankfully stretch out the hand"? In all ways "it was necessary that the logical side of things should likewise be made available." On the whole, wondrous higher developments of much, of Morality among the rest, are visible in the course of the world's doings, at this day. A plausible prediction were that the Ascetic System is not to regain its exclusive dominancy. Ever, indeed, must Self-denial, "*Annihilation of Self*," be the beginning of all moral action: meanwhile, he that looks well, may discern filaments of a nobler System, wherein this lies included as one harmonious element. Who knows, for example, what new unfoldings and complex adjustments await us, before the true relation of moral Greatness to moral Correctness, and their proportional value, can be established? How, again, is perfect tolerance for the Wrong to coexist with ever-present conviction that Right stands related to it, as a God does to a Devil, — an Infinite to an opposite Infinite? How, in a word, through what tumultuous vicissitudes, after how many false partial efforts, deepening the confusion, shall it at length be made manifest, and kept continually manifest, to the hearts of men, that the Good is not properly the highest, but the Beautiful; that the true Beautiful (differing from the false, as Heaven does from Vauxhall) comprehends in it the Good? — In some future century, it may be found that Denis Diderot, acting and professing, in wholeness and with full conviction, what the immense multitude act in halfness and without conviction, has, though by strange inverse methods, forwarded the result. It was long ago written, the Omnipotent "maketh the wrath of the wicked," the folly of the foolish, "to praise Him." In any case, Diderot acted it, and not we; Diderot bears it, and not we: peace be with Diderot!

The other branch of his renown is excellence as a Talker. Or in wider view, think his admirers, his philosophy was not more surpassing than his delivery thereof. What his philosophy amounts to, we have been examining: but now, that in this other conversational province he was eminent, is easily believed. A frank, ever-hoping, social character; a mind full of knowledge, full of fervor; of great compass, of great depth, ever on the alert: such a man could not have other than a "mouth of gold." It is still plain, whatsoever thing imaged itself before him was imaged in the most lucent clearness; was rendered back, with light labor, in corresponding clearness. Whether, at the same time, Diderot's conversation, relatively so superior, deserved the intrinsic character of supreme, may admit of question. The worth of words spoken depends, after all, on the wisdom that resides in them; and in Diderot's words there was often too little of this. Vivacity, far-darting briliancy, keenness of theoretic vision, paradoxical ingenuity, gayety, even touches of humor; all this must have been here: whosoever had preferred sincerity, earnestness, depth of practical rather than theoretic insight, with not less of impetuosity, of clearness and sureness, with humor, emphasis, or such other melody or rhythm as that utterance demanded, — must have come over to London; and, with forbearant submissiveness, listened to our Johnson. Had we the stronger man, then? Be it rather, as in that duel of Cœur-de-Lion with the light, nimble, yet also invincible Saladin, that each nation had the strength which most befitted it.

Closely connected with this power of conversation is Diderot's facility of composition. A talent much celebrated; numerous really surprising proofs whereof are on record: how he wrote long works within the week; sometimes within almost the four-and-twenty hours. Unhappily, enough still remains to make such feats credible. Most of Diderot's Works bear the clearest traces of extemporaneousness; *stans pede in uno!* They are much liker printed talk, than the concentrated well-considered utterance which, from a man of that weight, we expect to see set in types. It is said, "he wrote good pages, but could not write a good book." Substitute *did not* for *could not;* and there is truth in the saying. Clearness, as has been observed, comprehensibility at a glance, is the character of whatever Diderot wrote: a clearness which, in visual objects, rises into the region of the Artistic, and resembles that of Richardson or Defoe. Yet, grant that he makes his meaning clear, what is the nature of that meaning itself? Alas, for most part, only a hasty, flimsy, superficial meaning, with gleams of a deeper vision peering through. More or less of disorder reigns in all Works that Diderot wrote; not order, but the plausible appearance of such: the true heart of the matter is not found; "he skips deftly along the radii, and skips over the centre, and misses it."

Thus may Diderot's admired Universality and admired Facility have both turned to disadvantage for him. We speak not of his reception by the world: this indeed is the "age of specialties;" yet, owing to other causes, Diderot the Encyclopedist had success enough. But, what is of far more importance, his inward growth was marred: the strong tree shot not up in any one noble stem, bearing boughs, and fruit, and shade all round; but spread out horizontally, after a very moderate height, into innumerable branches, not useless, yet of quite secondary use. Diderot could have been an Artist; and he was little better than an Encyclopedic Artisan. No smatterer, indeed; a faithful artisan; of really universal equipment, in his sort: he did the work of many men; yet nothing, or little, which many could not have done.

Accordingly, his Literary Works, now lying finished some fifty years, have already, to the most surprising degree, shrunk in importance. Perhaps no man so much talked of is so little known; to the great majority he is no longer a Reality, but a Hearsay. Such, indeed, partly is the natural fate of Works Polemical, which almost all Diderot's are. The Polemic annihilates his opponent; but in so doing annihilates himself too, and both are swept away to make room for something other and farther. Add to this, the slight-textured transitory character of Diderot's style; and the fact is well enough explained. Meanwhile, let him to whom it applies consider it; him among whose gifts it was to rise into the Perennial, and who dwelt rather low down in the Ephemeral, and ephemerally fought and scrambled there! Diderot the great has contracted into Diderot the easily measurable: so must it be with others of the like.

In how many sentences can the net-product of all that tumultuous Atheism, printed over many volumes, be comprised! Nay, the whole *Encyclopédie*, that world's wonder of the eighteenth century, the Belus' Tower of an age of refined Illumination, what has it become? Alas, no stone tower, that will stand there as our strength and defence through all times; but, at best, a wooden *Helepolis* (City-taker), wherein stationed, the Philosophus Policaster has burnt and battered down many an old ruinous Sorbonne; and which now, when that work is pretty well over, may, in turn, be taken asunder, and used as firewood. The famed Encyclopedical Tree itself has proved an artificial one, and borne no fruit. We mean that, in its nature, it is mechanical only; one of those attempts to parcel out the invisible mystical Soul of Man, with its *infinitude* of phases and character, into shop-lists of what are called "faculties," "motives," and such like; which attempts may indeed be made with all degrees of insight, from that of a Doctor Spurzheim to that of Denis Diderot or Jeremy Bentham; and prove useful for a day, but for a day only.

Nevertheless it were false to regard Diderot as a Mechanist and nothing more; as one working and grinding blindly in the mill of mechanical Logic, joyful with his lot there, and unconscious of any other. Call him one rather who contributed to deliver us therefrom: both by his manful whole spirit as a Mechanist, which drove all things to their ultimatum and crisis; and even by a dim-struggling faculty, which virtually aimed beyond this. Diderot, we said, was gifted by Nature for an Artist: strangely flashing through his mechanical encumbrances, are rays of thought, which belong to the Poet, to the Prophet; which, in other environment, could have revealed the deepest to us. Not to seek far, consider this one little sentence, which he makes the last of the dying Sanderson: "*Le temps, la matière et l'espace ne sont peut-être qu'un point* (Time, Matter and Space are perhaps but a *point*)!"

So too in Art, both as a speaker and a doer, he is to be reckoned as one of those who pressed forward irresistibly out of the artificial barren sphere of that time, into a truer genial one. His Dramas, the *Fils Naturel*, the *Père de Famille*, have indeed ceased to live; yet is the attempt towards great things visible in them; the attempt remains to us, and seeks otherwise, and has found, and is finding, fulfilment. Not less in his *Salons* (Judgments of Art-Exhibitions), written hastily for Grimm, and by ill chance on artists of quite secondary character, do we find the freest recognition of whatever excellence there is; nay an impetuous endeavor, not critically, but even creatively, towards something more excellent. Indeed, what with their unrivalled clearness, painting the picture over again for us, so that we too *see* it, and can judge it; what with their sunny fervor, inventiveness, real artistic genius, which wants nothing but a *hand*, they are, with some few exceptions in the German tongue, the only Pictorial Criticisms we know of worth reading. Here too, as by his own practice in the Dramatic branch of art, Diderot stands forth as the main originator, almost the sole one in his own country, of that many-sided struggle towards what is called Nature, and copying of Nature, and faithfulness to Nature: a deep indispensable truth, subversive of the old error; yet under that figure, only a half-truth, for Art too is Art, as surely as Nature is Nature; which struggle, meanwhile, either as half-truth or working itself into a whole truth, may be seen, in countries that have any Art, still forming the tendency of all artistic endeavor. In which sense, Diderot's *Essay on Painting* has been judged worth translation by the greatest modern Judge of Art, and greatest modern Artist, in the highest kind of Art; and may be read anew, with argumentative commentary and exposition, in *Goethe's Works.*

Nay, let us grant, with pleasure, that for Diderot himself the realms of Art were not wholly unvisited; that he too, so heavily imprisoned, stole Promethean fire. Among these multitudinous, most miscellaneous Writings of his, in great part a manufactured farrago of Philosophism no longer salable, and now looking melancholy enough, — are two that we can almost call Poems; that have something perennially poetic in them: *Jacques le Fataliste;* in a still higher degree, the *Neveu de Rameau.* The occasional *blueness* of both; even that darkest indigo in some parts of the former, shall not altogether affright us. As it were, a loose straggling sunbeam flies here over Man's Existence in France, now nigh a century behind us: "from the height of luxurious elegance to the depths of shamelessness," all is here. Slack, careless seems the combination of the picture; wriggling, disjointed, like a bundle of flails; yet strangely united in the painter's inward unconscious feeling. Wearisomely crackling wit gets silent; a grim, taciturn, dare-devil, almost Hogarthian humor rises in the background. Like this there is nothing that we know of in the whole range of French literature: La Fontaine is shallow in comparison; the La Bruyère wit-species not to be named. It resembles *Don Quixote* rather; of somewhat similar stature; yet of complexion altogether different; through the one looks a sunny Elysium, through the other a sulphurous Erebus: both hold of the Infinite. This *Jacques,* perhaps, was not quite so hastily put together: yet there too haste is manifest: the Author finishes it off, not by working out the figures and movements, but by dashing his brush against the canvas; a manœuvre which in this case has not succeeded. The *Rameau's Nephew*, which is the shorter, is also the better; may pass for decidedly the best of all Diderot's compositions. It looks like a Sibylline utterance from a heart all in fusion: no ephemeral thing (for it was written as a Satire on Palissot) was ever more perennially treated. Strangely enough too, it lay some fifty years in German and Russian Libraries; came out first in the masterly version of Goethe, in 1805: and only (after a deceptive *re*-translation by a M. Saur, a courageous mystifier otherwise) reached the Paris public in 1821, — when perhaps *all* for whom and against whom it was written were no more! — It is a farce-tragedy; and its fate has corresponded to its purport. One day it must also be translated into English; but will require to be done by *head;* the common steam-machinery will not properly suffice for it.

We here (*con la bocca dolce*) take leave of Diderot in his intellectual aspect, as Artist and Thinker: a richly endowed, unfavorably situated nature; whose effort, much marred, yet not without fidelity of aim, can triumph, on rare occasions; and is perhaps nowhere utterly fruitless. In the moral aspect, as Man, he makes a somewhat similar figure; as indeed, in all men, in him especially, the Opinion and the Practice stand closely united; and as a wise man has remarked, "the speculative principles are often but a supplement (or excuse) to the practical manner of life." In conduct, Diderot can nowise seem admirable to us; yet neither inexcusable; on the whole, not at all quite worthless. Lavater traced in his physiognomy "something timorous;" which reading his friends admitted to be a correct one. Diderot, in truth, is no hero: the earnest soul, wayfaring and warfaring in the complexities of a World like to overwhelm him, yet wherein he by Heaven's grace will keep faithfully warfaring, prevailing or not, can derive small solacement from this light, fluctuating, not to say flimsy existence of Diderot: no Gospel in that kind has he left us.

The man, in fact, with all his high gifts, had rather a female character. Susceptible, sensitive, living by impulses, which at best he had *fashioned* into some show of principles; with vehemence enough, with even a female uncontrollableness; with little of manful steadfastness, considerateness, invincibility. Thus, too, we find him living mostly in the society of women, or of men who, like women, flattered him, and made life easy for him; recoiling with horror from an earnest Jean Jacques, who understood not the science of walking in a vain show; but imagined, poor man, that truth was there as a thing to be told, as a thing to be acted.

We call Diderot, then, not a coward; yet not in any sense a brave man. Neither towards himself, nor towards others, was he brave. All the virtues, says M. de Meister, which require not "a great *suite* (sequency) of ideas" were his; all that do require such a *suite* were not his. In other words, what duties were easy for him he did: happily Nature had rendered several easy. His spiritual aim, moreover, seemed not so much to be enforcement, exposition of Duty, as discovery of a Duty-made-easy. Natural enough that he should strike into that province of *sentiment, cœur noble* and so forth. Alas, to declare that the beauty of virtue is beautiful, costs comparatively little: to win it, and wear it, is quite another enterprise,—wherein the loud braggart, we know, is not the likeliest to succeed. On the whole, peace be with *sentiment*, for that also lies behind us!—For the rest, as hinted, what duties were difficult our Diderot left undone. How should he, the *cœur sensible*, front such a monster as Pain? And now, since misgivings cannot fail in that course, what is to be done but fill up all asperities with floods of *sensibilité*, and so voyage more or less smoothly along? *Est-il bon? Est-il méchant?* is his own account of himself. At all events, he was no voluntary hypocrite; that great praise can be given him. And thus with Mechanical Philosophism, and *passion vive;* working, flirting; "with more of softness than of true affection, sometimes with the malice and rage of a child, but on the whole an inexhaustible fund of good-natured simplicity," has he come down to us, for better or worse: and what can we do but receive him?—

If now we and our reader, reinterpreting for our present want that Life and Performance of Diderot, have brought it clearer before us, be the hour spent thereon, were it even more wearisome, no profitless one! Have we not striven to unite our own brief present moment more and more compactly with the Past and with the Future; have we not done what lay at our hand towards reducing that same Memoirism of the Eighteenth Century into History, and "weaving" a thread or two thereof nearer to the condition of a web?

But finally, if we rise with this matter, as we should try to do with all matters, into the proper region of Universal History, and look on it with the eye not of this time or of that time, but of Time at large, perhaps the prediction might stand here, That intrinsically, essentially little lies in it; that one day when the net-result of our European way of life comes to be summed up, this whole as yet so boundless concern of French Philosophism will dwindle into the thinnest of fractions, or vanish into nonentity! Alas, while the rude History and Thoughts of those same "*Juifs misérables*," the barbaric War-song of a Deborah and Barak, the rapt prophetic Utterance of an unkempt Isaiah, last now, with deepest significance, say only these three thousand years, — what has the thrice-resplendent *Encyclopédie* shrivelled into within these three-score! This is a fact which, explain it, express it, in what way he will, your Encyclopedist should actually consider. *Those* were tones caught from the sacred Melody of the All, and have harmony and meaning forever; *these* of his are but outer discords, and their jangling dies away without result. "The special, sole and deepest theme of the World's and Man's History," says the Thinker of our time, "whereto all other themes are subordinated, remains the Conflict of UNBELIEF and BELIEF. All epochs wherein Belief prevails, under what form it may, are splendid, heart-elevating, fruitful for contemporaries and posterity. All epochs, on the contrary, wherein Unbelief, under what form soever, maintains its sorry victory, should they even for a moment glitter with a sham splendor, vanish from the eyes of posterity; because no one chooses to burden himself with study of the unfruitful."

COUNT CAGLIOSTRO.

IN TWO FLIGHTS.[1]

[1833.]

FLIGHT FIRST.

"THE life of every man," says our friend Herr Sauerteig, "the life even of the meanest man, it were good to remember, is a Poem; perfect in all manner of Aristotelian requisites; with beginning, middle and end; with perplexities, and solutions; with its Will-strength (*Willenkraft*) and warfare against Fate, its elegy and battle-singing, courage marred by crime, everywhere the two tragic elements of Pity and Fear; above all, with supernatural machinery enough, — for was not the man *born* out of NONENTITY; did he not *die*, and miraculously vanishing return thither? The most indubitable Poem! Nay, whoso will, may he not name it a Prophecy, or whatever else is highest in his vocabulary; since only in Reality lies the essence and foundation of all that was ever fabled, visioned, sung, spoken, or babbled by the human species; and the actual Life of Man includes in it all Revelations, true and false, that have been, are, or are to be. Man! I say therefore, *reverence thy fellow-man.* He too issued from Above; is mystical and supernatural (as thou namest it): this know thou of a truth. Seeing also that we ourselves are of so high Authorship, is not that, in very deed, 'the highest Reverence,' and most needful for us: 'Reverence for oneself'?

"Thus, to my view, is every Life, more properly is every Man that has life to lead, a small strophe, or occasional verse, composed by the Supernal Powers; and published, in such type and shape, with such embellishments, emblematic head-piece and tail-piece as thou seest, to the thinking or unthinking Universe. Heroic strophes some few are; full of force and a sacred fire, so that to latest ages the hearts of those that read therein are made to tingle. Jeremiads others seem; mere weeping laments, harmonious or disharmonious Remonstrances against Destiny; whereat we too may sometimes profitably weep. Again, have we not flesh-and-blood strophes of the idyllic sort, — though in these days rarely, owing to Poor-Laws, Game-Laws, Population-Theories and the like! Farther, of the comic laughter-loving sort; yet ever with an unfathomable earnestness, as is fit, lying underneath: for, bethink thee, what is the mirthfulest grinning face of any Grimaldi, but a transitory *mask*, behind which quite otherwise grins — the most indubitable *Death's-head!* However, I say farther, there are strophes of the pastoral sort (as in Ettrick, Afghanistan, and elsewhere); of the farcic-tragic, melodramatic, of all named and a thousand unnamable sorts there are poetic strophes, written, as was said, in Heaven, printed on Earth, and published (bound in woollen cloth, or *clothes*) for the use of the studious. Finally, a small number seem utter Pasquils, mere ribald libels on Humanity: these too, however, are at times worth reading.

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[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, Nos. 43, 44 (July and August).

"In this wise," continues our too obscure friend, "out of all imaginable elements, awakening all imaginable moods of heart and soul, 'barbarous enough to excite, tender enough to assuage,' ever contradictory yet ever coalescing, is that mighty world-old Rhapsodia of Existence page after page (generation after generation), and chapter (or epoch) after chapter, poetically put together! This is what some one names 'the grand sacred Epos, or Bible of World-History; infinite in meaning as the Divine Mind it emblems; wherein he is wise that can read here a line, and there a line.'

"Remark too, under another aspect, whether it is not in this same Bible of World-History that all men, in all times, with or without clear consciousness, have been unwearied to read, what we may call *read;* and again to write, or rather to be *written!* What is all History, and all Poesy, but a deciphering somewhat thereof, out of that mystic heaven-written Sanscrit; and rendering it into the speech of men? *Know thyself,* value thyself, is a moralist's commandment (which I only half approve of); but *Know others,* value others, is the hest of Nature herself. Or again, *Work while it is called To-day:* is not that also the irreversible law of being for mortal man? And now, what is all working, what is all knowing, but a faint interpreting and a faint showing-forth of that same *Mystery of Life,* which ever remains infinite, — heaven-written mystic Sanscrit? View it as we will, to him that lives, Life is a divine matter; felt to be of quite sacred significance. Consider the wretchedest 'straddling biped that wears breeches' of thy acquaintance; into whose wool-head, Thought, as thou rashly supposest, never entered; who, in froth-element of business, pleasure, or what else he names it, walks forever in a vain show; asking not Whence, or Why, or Whither; looking up to the Heaven above as if some upholsterer had made it, and down to the Hell beneath as if *he* had neither part nor lot there: yet tell me, does not he too, over and above his five finite senses, acknowledge some sixth *infinite* sense, were it only that of Vanity? For, sate him in the other five as you may, will this sixth sense leave him rest? Does he not rise early and sit late, and study impromptus, and (in constitutional countries) parliamentary motions, and bursts of eloquence, and gird himself in whalebone, and pad himself and perk himself, and in all ways painfully take heed to his goings; feeling (if we must admit it) that an altogether infinite endowment has been intrusted him also, namely, a Life to lead? Thus does he too, with his whole force, in his own way, proclaim that the world-old Rhapsodia of Existence is divine, and an inspired Bible; and, himself a wondrous *verse* therein (be it heroic, be it pasquillic), study with his whole soul, as we said, both to *read* and to *be written!*

"Here also I will observe, that the *manner* in which men read this same Bible is, like all else, proportionate to their stage of culture, to the circumstances of their environment. First, and among the earnest Oriental nations, it was read wholly like a Sacred Book; most clearly by the most earnest, those wondrous Hebrew Readers; whose reading accordingly was itself sacred, has meaning for all tribes of mortal men; since ever, to the latest generation of the world, a true utterance from the innermost of man's being will speak significantly to man. But, again, in how different a style was that other Oriental reading of the Magi; of Zerdusht, or whoever it was that first so opened the matter? Gorgeous semi-sensual Grandeurs and Splendors: on infinite darkness, brightest-glowing light and fire; — of which, all defaced by Time, and turned mostly into lies, a quite late reflex, in those Arabian Tales and the like, still leads captive every heart. Look, thirdly, at the earnest West, and that Consecration of the Flesh, which stept forth life-lusty, radiant, smiling-earnest, in immortal grace, from under the chisel and the stylus of old Greece. Here too was the Infinite intelligibly proclaimed as infinite: and the antique man walked between a Tartarus and an Elysium, his brilliant Paphos-islet of Existence embraced by boundless oceans of sadness and fateful gloom. — Of which three antique manners of reading, our modern manner, you will remark, has been little more than imitation: for always, indeed, the West has been rifer of doers than of speakers. The Hebrew manner has had its echo in our Pulpits and choral aisles; the Ethnic Greek and Arabian in numberless mountains of Fiction, rhymed, rhymeless, published by subscription, by puffery, in periodicals, or by money of your own (*durch eignes Geld*). Till now at last, by dint of iteration and reiteration through some ten centuries, all these manners have grown obsolete, wearisome, meaningless; listened to only as the monotonous moaning wind, while there is nothing else to listen to: — and so now, well-nigh in total oblivion of the Infinitude of Life (except what small *unconscious* recognition the 'straddling biped' above argued of may have), we wait, in hope and patience, for some *fourth* manner of anew convincingly announcing it."

These singular sentences from the *Æsthetische Springwurzeln* we have thought right to translate and quote, by way of proem and apology. We are here about to give some critical account of what Herr Sauerteig would call a "flesh-and-blood Poem of the purest Pasquil sort;" in plain words, to examine the biography of the most perfect scoundrel that in these latter ages has marked the world's history. Pasquils too, says

Sauerteig, "are at times worth reading." Or quitting that mystic dialect of his, may we not assert in our own way, that the history of an Original Man is always worth knowing? So magnificent a thing is Will incarnated in a creature of like fashion with ourselves, we run to witness *all* manifestations thereof: what man soever has marked out a peculiar path of life for himself, let it lead this way or that way, and successfully travelled the same, of him we specially inquire, How he travelled; What befell him on the journey? Though the man were a knave of the first water, this hinders not the question, How he managed his knavery? Nay it rather encourages such question; for nothing properly is wholly despicable, at once detestable and forgettable, but your half-knave, he who is neither true nor false; who never in his existence once spoke or did any true thing (for indeed his mind lives in twilight, with cat-vision, incapable of *discerning* truth); and yet had not the manfulness to speak or act any decided lie; but spent his whole life in plastering together the True and the False, and therefrom manufacturing the Plausible. Such a one our Transcendentals have defined as a Moral Hybrid and chimera; therefore, under the moral point of view, as an Impossibility, and mere deceptive Nonentity, — put together for commercial purposes. Of which sort, nevertheless, how many millions, through all manner of gradations, from the wielder of kings' sceptres to the vender of brimstone matches, at tea-tables, council-tables, behind shop-counters, in priests' pulpits, incessantly and everywhere, do now, in this world of ours, in this Isle of ours, offer themselves to view!

From such, at least from this intolerable over-proportion of such, might the merciful Heavens one day deliver us! Glorious, heroic, fruitful for his own Time, and for all Time and all Eternity, is the constant Speaker and Doer of Truth! If no such again, in the present generation, is to be vouchsafed us, let us have at least the melancholy pleasure of beholding a decided Liar. Wretched mortal, who with a single eye to be "respectable" forever sittest cobbling together two Inconsistencies, which stick not for an hour, but require ever new gluten and labor, — will it, by no length of experience, no bounty of Time or Chance, be revealed to thee that Truth is of Heaven, and Falsehood is of Hell; that if thou cast not from thee the one or the other, thy existence is wholly an Illusion and optical and tactual Phantasm; that properly thou existest not at all? Respectable! What, in the Devil's name, is the use of Respectability, with never so many gigs and silver spoons, if thou inwardly art the pitifulest of all men? I would thou wert either cold or hot.

One such desirable second-best, perhaps the chief of all such, we have here found in the Count Alessandro di Cagliostro, Pupil of the Sage Althotas, Foster-child of the Scherif of Mecca, probable Son of the last King of Trebisond; named also Acharat, and Unfortunate Child of Nature; by profession healer of diseases, abolisher of wrinkles, friend of the poor and impotent, grand-master of the Egyptian Mason-lodge of High Science, Spirit-summoner, Gold-cook, Grand Cophta, Prophet, Priest, and thaumaturgic moralist and swindler; really a Liar of the first magnitude, thorough-paced in all provinces of lying, what one may call the King of Liars. Mendez Pinto, Baron Münchausen and others are celebrated in this art, and not without some color of justice; yet must it in candor remain doubtful whether any of these comparatively were much more than liars from the teeth onwards: a perfect character of the species in question, who lied not in word only, nor in act and word only, but continually, in thought, word and act; and, so to speak, lived wholly in an element of lying, and from birth to death did nothing but lie, — was still a desideratum. Of which desideratum Count Alessandro offers, we say, if not the fulfilment, perhaps as near an approach to it as the limited human faculties permit. Not in the modern ages, probably not in the ancient (though these had their Autolycus, their Apollonius, and enough else), did any completer figure of this sort issue out of Chaos and Old Night: a sublime kind of figure, presenting himself with "the air of calm strength," of sure perfection in his art; whom the heart opens itself to, with wonder and a sort of welcome. "The only vice I know," says one, "is Inconsistency." At lowest, answer we, he that *does* his work shall have his work judged of. Indeed, if Satan himself has in these days become a poetic hero, why should not Cagliostro, for some short hour, be a prose one? "One first question," says a great Philosopher, "I ask of every man: Has he an aim, which with undivided soul he follows, and advances towards? Whether his aim is a right one or a wrong one, forms but my second question." Here, then, is a small "human Pasquil," not without poetic interest.

However, be this as it may, we apprehend the eye of science at least cannot view him with indifference. Doubtful, false as much is in Cagliostro's manner of being, of this there is no doubt, that starting from the lowest point of Fortune's wheel, he rose to a height universally notable; that, without external furtherance, money, beauty, bravery, almost without common sense, or any discernible worth whatever, he sumptuously supported, for a long course of years, the wants and digestion of one of the greediest bodies, and one of the greediest minds; outwardly in his five senses, inwardly in his "sixth sense, that of vanity," nothing straitened. Clear enough it is, however much may be supposititious, that this japanned Chariot, rushing through the world, with dust-clouds and loud noise, at the speed of four swift horses, and top-heavy with luggage, has an existence. The six Beef-eaters too, that ride prosperously heralding his advent, honorably escorting, menially waiting on him, are they not realities? Ever must the purse open, paying turnpikes, tavern-bills, drink-moneys, and the thousand-fold tear and wear of such a team; yet ever, like a horn-of-plenty, does it pour; and after brief rest, the chariot ceases not to roll. Whereupon rather pressingly arises the scientific question: How? Within that wonderful machinery, of horses, wheels, top-luggage, beef-eaters, sits only a gross, thick-set Individual, evincing dulness enough; and by his side a Seraphina, with a look of doubtful reputation: how comes it that means still meet ends, that the whole Engine, like a steam-coach wanting fuel, does not stagnate, go silent, and fall to pieces in the ditch? Such question did the scientific curiosity of the present writer often put; and for many a day in vain.

Neither, indeed, as Book-readers know, was he peculiar herein. The great Schiller, for example, struck both with the poetic and the scientific phases of the matter, admitted the influences of the former to shape themselves anew within him; and strove with his usual impetuosity to burst (since unlocking was impossible) the secrets of the latter: and so his unfinished Novel, the *Geisterseher*, saw the light. Still more renowned is Goethe's Drama of the *Gross-Kophta;* which, as himself informs us, delivered him from a state of mind that had become alarming to certain friends; so deep was the hold this business, at one of its epochs, had taken of him. A dramatic Fiction, that of his, based on the strictest possible historical study and inquiry; wherein perhaps the faithfulest image of the historical Fact, as yet extant in any shape, lies in artistic miniature curiously unfolded. Nay mere Newspaper-readers, of a certain age, can bethink them of our London Egyptian Lodges of High Science; of the Countess Seraphina's dazzling jewelries, nocturnal brilliancies, sibyllic ministrations and revelations; of Miss Fry and Milord Scott, and Messrs. Priddle and the other shark *bailiffs;* and Lord Mansfield's judgment-seat; the Comte d'Adhémar, the Diamond Necklace, and Lord George Gordon. For Cagliostro, hovering through unknown space, twice (perhaps thrice) lighted on our London, and did business in the great chaos there.

Unparalleled Cagliostro! Looking at thy so attractively decorated private theatre, wherein thou actedst and livedst, what hand but itches to draw aside thy curtain; overhaul thy paste-boards, paint-pots, paper-mantles, stage-lamps, and turning the whole inside out, find *thee* in the middle thereof! For there of a truth wert thou: though the rest was all foam and sham, there sattest *thou*, as large as life, and as esurient; warring against the world, and indeed conquering the world, for it remained thy tributary, and yielded daily rations. Innumerable Sheriff's-officers, Exempts, Sbirri, Alguazils, of every European climate, were prowling on thy traces, their intents hostile enough; thyself wert single against them all; in the whole earth thou hadst no friend. What say we, in the whole earth? In the whole universe thou hadst no friend! Heaven knew nothing of thee; *could* in charity know nothing of thee; and as for Beelzebub, *his* friendship, it is ascertained, cannot count for much.

But to proceed with business. The present inquirer, in obstinate investigation of a phenomenon so noteworthy, has searched through the whole not inconsiderable circle which his tether (of circumstances, geographical position, trade, health, extent of money-capital) enables him to describe: and, sad to say, with the most imperfect results. He has read Books in various languages and jargons; feared not to soil his fingers, hunting through ancient dusty Magazines, to sicken his heart in any labyrinth of iniquity and imbecility; nay he had not grudged to dive even into the infectious *Mémoires de Casanova*, for a hint or two, — could he have found that work, which, however, most British Librarians make a point of denying that they possess. A painful search, as through some spiritual pest-house; and then with such issue! The quantity of discoverable Printing about Cagliostro (so much being burnt) is now not great; nevertheless in frightful proportion to the quantity of information given. Except vague Newspaper rumors and surmises, the things found written of this Quack are little more than temporary Manfestoes, by himself, by gulled or gulling disciples of his: not true therefore; at best only certain fractions of what he wished or expected the blinder Public to reckon true; misty, embroiled, for most part highly stupid; perplexing, even provoking; which can only be believed — to be, under such and such conditions, Lies. Of this sort emphatically is the English "*Life of the Count Cagliostro*, price three shillings and sixpence:" a Book indeed which one might hold (so fatuous, inane is it) to be some mere dream-vision and unreal eidolon, did it not now stand palpably there, as "Sold by T. Hookham, Bond Street, 1787;" and bear to be handled, spurned at and torn into pipe-matches. Some human creature doubtless was at the writing of it; but of what kind, country, trade, character or gender, you will in vain strive to fancy. Of like fabulous stamp are the *Mémoires pour le*

Comte de Cagliostro, emitted, with *Requête à joindre*, from the Bastille, during that sorrowful business of the Diamond Necklace, in 1786; no less the *Lettre du Comte de Cagliostro au Peuple Anglais*, which followed shortly after, at London; from which two indeed, that fatuous inexplicable English *Life* has perhaps been mainly manufactured. Next come the *Mémoires authentiques pour servir à l'Histoire du Comte de Cagliostro*, twice printed in the same year 1786, at Strasburg and at Paris; a swaggering, lascivious Novelette, without talent, without truth or worth, happily of small size. So fares it with us: alas, all this is but the *outside* decorations of the private theatre, or the sounding of catcalls and applauses from the stupid audience; nowise the interior bare walls and dress-room which we wanted to see! Almost our sole even half-genuine documents are a small barren Pamphlet, *Cagliostro démasqué à Varsovie, en* 1780; and a small barren Volume purporting to be his *Life*, written at Rome, of which latter we have a French version, dated 1791. It is on this *Vie de Joseph Balsamo, connu sous le Nom de Comte Cagliostro*, that our main dependence must be placed; of which Work, meanwhile, whether it is wholly or only half genuine, the reader may judge by one fact: that it comes to us through the medium of the Roman Inquisition, and the proofs to substantiate it lie in the Holy Office there. Alas, this reporting Familiar of the Inquisition was too probably something of a Liar; and he reports lying Confessions of one who was not so much a Liar as a Lie! In such enigmatic duskiness, and thrice-folded involution, after all inquiries, does the matter yet hang.

Nevertheless, by dint of meditation and comparison, light-points that stand fixed, and abide scrutiny, do here and there disclose themselves; diffusing a fainter light over what otherwise were dark, so that it is no longer invisible, but only dim. Nay after all, is there not in this same uncertainty a kind of fitness, of poetic congruity? Much that would offend the eye stands discreetly lapped in shade. Here too Destiny has cared for her favorite: that a powder-nimbus of astonishment, mystification and uncertainty should still encircle the Quack of Quacks, is right and suitable; such was by Nature and Art his chosen uniform and environment. Thus, as formerly in Life, so now in History, it is in huge fluctuating smoke-whirlwinds, partially illumed into a most brazen glory, yet united, coalescing with the region of everlasting Darkness, in miraculous clear-obscure, that he works and rides.

"Stern Accuracy in inquiring, bold Imagination in expounding and filling up; these," says friend Sauerteig, "are the two pinions on which History soars," — or flutters and wabbles. To which two pinions let us and the readers of this Magazine now daringly commit ourselves. Or chiefly indeed to the *latter* pinion, of Imagination; which, if it be the *larger*, will indeed make an unequal flight! Meanwhile, the style at least shall if possible be equal to the subject.

Know, then, that in the year 1743, in the city of Palermo, in Sicily, the family of Signor Pietro Balsamo, a shopkeeper, were exhilarated by the birth of a Boy. Such occurrences have now become so frequent, that, miraculous as they are, they occasion little astonishment: old Balsamo for a space, indeed, laid down his ellwands and unjust balances; but for the rest, met the event with equanimity. Of the possetings, junketings, gossipings, and other ceremonial rejoicings, transacted according to the custom of the country, for welcome to a New-comer, not the faintest tradition has survived; enough, that the small New-comer, hitherto a mere ethnic or heathen, is in a few days made a Christian of, or as we vulgarly say, christened; by the name Giuseppe. A fat, red, globular kind of fellow, not under nine pounds avoirdupois, the bold Imagination can figure him to be: if not proofs, there are indications that sufficiently betoken as much.

Of his teething and swaddling adventures, of his scaldings, squallings, pukings, purgings, the strictest search into History can discover nothing; not so much as the epoch when he passed out of long-clothes stands noted in the fasti of Sicily. That same "larger pinion" of Imagination, nevertheless, conducts him from his native blind-alley. into the adjacent street *Casaro;* describes him, with certain contemporaries now unknown, essaying himself in small games of skill; watching what phenomena, of carriage-transits, dog-battles, street-music, or such like, the neighborhood might offer (intent above all on any windfall of chance *provender*); now, with incipient scientific spirit, puddling in the gutters; now, as small poet (or maker), baking mud-pies. Thus does he tentatively coast along the outskirts of Existence, till once he shall be strong enough to land and make a footing there.

Neither does it seem doubtful that with the earliest exercise of speech, the gifts of simulation and dissimulation began to manifest themselves; Giuseppe, or Beppo as he was now called, could indeed speak the truth, — but only when he saw his advantage in it. Hungry also, as above hinted, he too probably often was: a keen faculty of digestion, a meagre larder within doors; these two circumstances, so frequently conjoined in this world, reduced him to his inventions. As to the thing called Morals, and knowledge of Right and Wrong, it seems pretty certain that such knowledge, the sad fruit of Man's Fall, had in great part been spared him; if he ever heard the commandment, *Thou shalt not steal*, he most probably could not believe in it, therefore could not obey it. For the rest, though of quick temper, and a ready striker where clear prospect of victory showed itself, we fancy him vociferous rather than bellicose, not prone to violence where stratagem will serve; almost pacific, indeed, had not his many wants necessitated him to many conquests. Above all things, a brazen impudence develops itself; the crowning gift of one born to scoundrelism. In a word, the fat thick-set Beppo, as he skulks about there, plundering, playing dog's-tricks, with his finger in every mischief, already gains character; shrill housewives of the neighborhood, whose sausages he has filched, whose weaker sons maltreated, name him Beppo Maldetto, and indignantly prophesy that he will be hanged. A prediction which, as will be seen, the issue has signally falsified.

We hinted that the household larder was in a leanish state; in fact, the outlook of the Balsamo family was getting troubled; old Balsamo had, during these things, been called away on his long journey. Poor man! The future eminence and pre-eminence of his Beppo he foresaw not, or what a world's-wonder he had thoughtlessly generated; as indeed, which of us, by much calculating, can sum up the net-total (Utility, or Inutility) of any his most indifferent act, — a seed cast into the seedfield of Time, to grow there, producing fruits or poisons, forever! Meanwhile Beppo himself gazed heavily into the matter; hung his thick lips while he saw his mother weeping; and, for the rest, eating what fat or sweet thing he could come at, let Destiny take its course.

The poor widow, ill-named *Felicità*, spinning out a painful livelihood by such means as only the poor and forsaken know, could not but many times cast an impatient eye on her brass-faced, voracious Beppo; and ask him, If he never meant to turn himself to anything? A maternal uncle, of the moneyed sort (for he has uncles not without influence), has already placed him in the Seminary of Saint Roch, to gain some tincture of schooling there: but Beppo feels himself misplaced in that sphere; "more than once runs away;" is flogged, snubbed, tyrannically checked on all sides; and finally, with such slender stock of schooling as had pleased to offer itself, returns to the street. The widow, as we said, urges him, the uncles urge: Beppo, wilt thou never turn thyself to anything? Beppo, with such speculative faculty, from such low watch-tower as he commands, is in truth, being forced to it, from time to time, looking abroad into the world; surveying the conditions of mankind, therewith contrasting his own wishes and capabilities. Alas, his wishes are manifold; a most hot Hunger (in all kinds), as above hinted; but on the other hand, his leading capability seemed only the Power to Eat. What profession or condition, then? Choose; for it is time. Of all the terrestrial professions, that of Gentleman, it seemed to Beppo, had, under these circumstances, been most suited to his feelings: but then the outfit? the apprentice-fee? Failing which, he, with perhaps as much sagacity as one could expect, decides for the Ecclesiastical.

Behold him then, once more by the uncle's management, journeying, a chubby brass-faced boy of thirteen, beside the Reverend Father-General of the Benfratelli, to their neighboring Convent of Cartegirone, with intent to enter himself novice there. He has donned the novice-habit; is "intrusted to the keeping of the Convent-Apothecary," on whose gallipots and crucibles he looks round with wonder. Were it by accident that he found himself Apothecary's Famulus, were it by choice of his own — nay was it not, in either case, by *design* of Destiny, intent on perfecting her work? — Enough, in this Cartegirone Laboratory there awaited him, though as yet he knew it not, life-guidance and determination; the great want of every genius, even of the scoundrel-genius. He himself confesses that he here learned some (or, as he calls it, *the*) "principles of chemistry and medicine." Natural enough: new books of the Chemists lay here, old books of the Alchemists; distillations, sublimations visibly went on; discussions there were, oral and written, of gold-making, salve-making, treasure-digging, divining-rods, projection, and the alcahest: besides, had he not among his fingers calxes, acids, Leyden-jars? Some first elements of medico-chemical conjurership, so far as phosphorescent mixtures, aqua-toffana, ipecacuanha, cantharides tincture, and such like would go, were now attainable; sufficient when the hour came, to set up any average Quack, much more the Quack of Quacks. It is here, in this unpromising environment, that the seeds, therapeutic, thaumaturgic, of the Grand Cophta's stupendous workings and renown were sown.

Meanwhile, as observed, the environment looked unpromising enough. Beppo with his two endowments, of Hunger and of Power to Eat, had made the best choice he could; yet, as it soon proved, a rash and disappointing one. To his astonishment, he finds that even here he "is in a conditional world;" and, if he will employ his capability of eating or enjoying, must first, in some measure, work and suffer. Contention enough hereupon: but now dimly arises or reproduces itself, the question, Whether there were not a *shorter* road, that of stealing? Stealing — under which, generically taken, you may include the whole art of scoundrelism; for what is Lying itself but a *theft* of my belief? — stealing, we say, is properly the Northwest Passage to Enjoyment: while common Navigators sail painfully along torrid shores, laboriously doubling this or the other Cape of Hope, your adroit Thief-Parry, drawn on smooth dog-sledges, is already there and back again. The misfortune is, that stealing requires a talent; and failure in that Northwest voyage is more fatal than in any other. We hear that Beppo was "often punished:" painful experiences of the fate of genius; for all genius, by its nature, comes to disturb *somebody* in his ease, and your thief-genius more so than most!

Readers can now fancy the sensitive skin of Beppo mortified with prickly cilices, wealed by knotted thongs; his soul afflicted by vigils and forced fasts; no eye turned kindly on him; everywhere the bent of his genius rudely contravened. However, it is the first property of genius to grow in spite of contradiction, and even by means thereof; — as the vital germ pushes itself through the dull soil, and lives by what strove to bury it! Beppo, waxing into strength of bone and character, sets his face stiffly against persecution, and is not a whit disheartened. On *such* chastisements and chastisers he can look with a certain genial disdain. Beyond convent-walls, with their sour stupid shavelings, lies Palermo, lies the world; here too is he, still alive, — though worse off than he wished; and feels that the world is his oyster, which he (by chemical or other means) will one day open. Nay, we find there is a touch of grim Humor unfolds itself in the youth; the surest sign, as is often said, of a character naturally great. Witness, for example, how he acts on this to his ardent temperament so trying occasion. While the monks sit at meat, the impetuous voracious Beppo (that stupid Inquisition-Biographer records it as a thing of course) is set not to eat with them, not to pick up the crumbs that fall from them, but to stand "reading the Martyrology" for their pastime! The brave adjusts himself to the inevitable. Beppo reads that dullest Martyrology of theirs; but reads out of it not what is printed there, but what his own vivid brain on the spur of the moment devises: instead of the names of Saints, all heartily indifferent to him, he reads out the names of the most notable Palermo "unfortunate females," now beginning to interest him a little. What a "deep world-irony," as the Germans call it, lies here! The Monks, of course, felled him to the earth, and flayed him with scourges; but what did it avail? This only became apparent, to himself and them, that he had now outgrown their monk-discipline; as the psyche does its chrysalis-shell, and bursts it. Giuseppe Balsamo bids farewell to Cartegirone forever and a day.

So now, by consent or not of the ghostly Benfratelli (Friars of *Mercy*, as they were named!), our Beppo has again returned to the maternal uncle at Palermo. The uncle naturally asked him, What he next meant to do? Beppo, after stammering and hesitating for some length of weeks, makes answer: Try Painting. Well and good! So Beppo gets him colors, brushes, fit tackle, and addicts himself for some space of time to the study of what is innocently called *Design*. Alas, if we consider Beppo's great Hunger, now that new senses were unfolding in him, how inadequate are the exiguous resources of Design; how necessary to attempt quite another deeper species of Design, of Designs! It is true, he lives with his uncle, has culinary meat; but where is the pocket-money for other costlier sorts of meats to come from? As the Kaiser Joseph was wont to say: From my head alone (*De ma tête seule*)!

The Roman Biographer, though a most wooden man, has incidentally thrown some light on Beppo's position at this juncture: both on his wants and his resources. As to the first, it appears (using the wooden man's phraseology) that he kept the "worst company," led the "loosest life;" was hand-in-glove with all the swindlers, gamblers, idle apprentices, unfortunate females, of Palermo: in the study and practice of Scoundrelism diligent beyond most. The genius which has burst asunder convent-walls, and other rubbish of impediments, now flames upward towards its mature splendor. Wheresoever a stroke of mischief is to be done, a slush of so-called vicious enjoyment to be swallowed, there with hand and throat is Beppo Balsamo seen. He will be a Master, one day, in his profession. Not indeed that he has yet quitted Painting, or even purposes so much: for the present, it is useful, indispensable, as a stalking-horse to the maternal uncle and neighbors; nay to himself, — for with all the ebullient impulses of scoundrel-genius restlessly seething in him, irrepressibly bursting through, he has the noble unconsciousness of genius; guesses not, dare not guess, that he is a born scoundrel, much less a born world-scoundrel.

But as for the other question, of his resources, these we perceive were several-fold, and continually extending. Not to mention any pictorial exiguities, which indeed existed chiefly in expectance, — there had almost accidentally arisen for him, in the first place, the resource of Pandering. He has a fair cousin living in the house with him, and she again has a lover; Beppo stations himself as go-between; delivers letters; fails not to drop hints that a lady, to be won or kept, must be generously treated; that such and such a pair of earrings, watch, necklace, or even sum of money, would work wonders; which valuables, adds the wooden Roman Biographer, "he then appropriated furtively." Like enough! Next, however, as another more lasting resource, he forges; at first in a small way, and trying his apprentice-hand: tickets for the theatre, and such trifles. Ere long, however, we see him fly at higher quarry; by practice he has acquired perfection in the great art of counterfeiting hands; and will exercise it on the large or on the narrow scale, for a consideration. Among his relatives is a Notary, with whom he can insinuate himself; for purpose of study, or even of practice. In the presses of this Notary lies a Will, which Beppo contrives to come at, and falsify "for the benefit of a certain Religious House." Much good may it do them! Many years afterwards the fraud was detected; but Beppo's benefit in it was spent and safe long before. Thus again the stolid Biographer expresses horror or wonder that he should have forged leave-of-absence for a monk, "counterfeiting the signature of the Superior." Why not? A forger must forge what is wanted of him: the Lion truly preys not on mice; yet shall he refuse such, if they jump into his mouth? Enough, the indefatigable Beppo has here opened a quite boundless mine; wherein through his whole life he will, as occasion calls, dig, at his convenience. Finally, he can predict fortunes and show visions, — by phosphorus and legerdemain. This, however, only as a dilettantism; to take up the earnest profession of Magician does not yet enter into his views. Thus perfecting himself in all branches of his art, does our Balsamo live and grow. Stupid, pudding-faced as he looks and is, there is a vulpine astucity in him; and then a wholeness, a heartiness, a kind of blubbery impetuosity, an oiliness so plausible-looking: give him only length of life, he will rise to the top of his profession.

Consistent enough with such blubbery impetuosity in Beppo is another fact we find recorded of him, that at this time he was found "in most brawls," whether in street or tavern. The way of his business led him into liability to such; neither as yet had he learned prudence by age. Of choleric temper, with all his obesity; a square-built, burly, vociferous fellow; ever ready with his stroke (if victory seemed sure); nay, at bottom, not without a certain pig-like defensive-ferocity, perhaps even something more. Thus, when you find him making a point to attack, if possible, "*all* officers of justice," and deforce them; delivering the wretched from their talons: was not this, we say, a kind of dog-faithfulness, and public spirit, either of the mastiff or of the cur species? Perhaps too there was a touch of that old Humor and "world-irony" in it. One still more unquestionable feat he is recorded (we fear, on imperfect evidence) to have done: "assassinated a canon."

Remonstrances from growling maternal uncles could not fail; threats, disdains from ill-affected neighbors; tears from an expostulating widowed mother: these he shakes from him like dew-drops from the lion's mane. Still less could the Police neglect him; him the visibly rising Professor of Swindlery; the swashbuckler, to boot, and deforcer of bailiffs: he has often been captured, haled to their bar; yet hitherto, by defect of evidence, by good luck, intercession of friends, been dismissed with admonition. Two things, nevertheless, might now be growing clear: first, that the die was cast with Beppo, and he a scoundrel for life; second, that such a mixed, composite, crypto-scoundrel life could not endure, but must unfold itself into a pure, declared one. The Tree that is planted stands not still; *must* pass through all its stages and phases, from the state of acorn to that of green leafy oak, of withered leafless oak; to the state of felled timber, finally to that of firewood and ashes. Not less (though less visibly to dull eyes) the Act that is done, the condition that has realized itself; above all things, the Man, with his Fortunes, that has been born. Beppo, every way in vigorous vitality, cannot continue half-painting half-swindling in Palermo; must develop himself into whole swindler; and, unless hanged there, seek his bread elsewhere. What the proximate cause, or signal, of such crisis and development might be, no man could say; yet most men would have confidently guessed, The Police. Nevertheless it proved otherwise; not by the flaming sword of Justice, but by the rusty dirk of a foolish private individual, is Beppo driven forth.

Walking one day in the fields (as the bold historic Imagination will figure) with a certain ninny of a "Goldsmith named Marano," as they pass one of those rock-chasms frequent in the fair Island of Sicily, Beppo begins, in his oily, voluble way, to hint, That treasures often lay hid; that a Treasure lay hid *there*, as he knew by some pricking of his thumbs, divining-rod, or other talismanic monition: which Treasure might, by aid of science, courage, secrecy and a small judicious advance of money, be fortunately lifted. The gudgeon takes; advances, by degrees, to the length of "sixty gold Ounces;"[1] sees magic circles dawn in the wane or in the full of the moon, blue (phosphorus) flames arise, split twigs auspiciously quiver; and at length — demands peremptorily that the Treasure be dug. A night is fixed on: the ninny Goldsmith, trembling with rapture and terror, breaks ground; digs, with thick breath and cold sweat, fiercely down, down, Beppo relieving him: the work advances; when, ah! at a certain stage of it (*before* fruition) hideous yells arise, a jingle like the emptying of Birmingham; six Devils pounce upon the poor sheep Goldsmith, and beat him almost to *mutton;* mercifully sparing Balsamo, — who indeed has himself summoned them thither, and as it were created them (with goatskins and burnt cork). Marano, though a ninny, now knew how it lay; and furthermore that he had a stiletto. One of the grand drawbacks of swindler-genius! You accomplish the Problem; and then — the Elementary Quantities, Algebraic Symbols you worked on, will fly in your face!

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[1] The Sicilian Ounce (*Onza*) is worth about ten shillings sterling.

Hearing of stilettos, our Algebraist begins to look around him, and view his empire of Palermo in the concrete. An empire now much exhausted; much infested, too, with sorrows of all kinds, and every day the more; nigh ruinous, in short; not worth being stabbed for. There is a world elsewhere. In any case, the young Raven has now shed his pens, and got fledged for flying. Shall he not spurn the whole from him, and soar off? Resolved, performed! Our Beppo quits Palermo; and, as it proved, on a long voyage: or, as the Inquisition-Biographer has it, "he fled from Palermo, and overran the whole Earth."

Here, then, ends the First Act of Count Alessandro Cagliostro's Life-drama. Let the curtain drop; and hang unrent, before an audience of mixed feeling, till the First of August.

FLIGHT LAST.

Before entering on the second Section of Count Beppo's History, the Editor will indulge in a philosophical reflection.

This Beppic Hegira, or Flight from Palermo, we have now arrived at, brings us down, in European History, to somewhere about the epoch of the Peace of Paris. Old Feudal Europe, while Beppo flies forth into the Whole Earth, has just finished the last of her "tavern-brawls," or wars; and lain down to doze, and yawn, and disconsolately wear off the headaches, bruises, nervous prostration and flaccidity consequent thereon: for the brawl had been a long one, *Seven Years* long; and there had been many such, begotten, as is usual, of intoxication from

Pride or other Devil's-drink, and foul humors in the constitution. Alas, it was not so much a disconsolate doze, after ebriety and quarrel, that poor old Feudal Europe had now to undergo, and then on awakening to drink anew, and quarrel anew: old Feudal Europe has fallen a-dozing to die! Her next awakening will be with no tavern-brawl, at the *King's Head* or *Prime Minister* tavern; but with the stern Avatar of DEMOCRACY, hymning its world-thrilling birth- and battle-song in the distant West; — therefrom to go out conquering and to conquer, till it have made the circuit of all the Earth, and old dead Feudal Europe is born again (after infinite pangs!) into a new Industrial one. At Beppo's Hegira, as we said, Europe was in the last languor and stertorous fever-sleep of Dissolution: alas, with us, and with our sons for a generation or two, it is almost still worse, — were it not that in Birth-throes there is ever hope, in Death-throes the final departure of hope.

Now the philosophic reflection we were to indulge in, was no other than this, most germane to our subject: the portentous extent of Quackery, the multitudinous variety of Quacks that, along with our Beppo, and under him each in his degree, overran all Europe during that same period, the latter half of last century. It was the very age of impostors, cut-purses, swindlers, double-goers, enthusiasts, ambiguous persons; quacks simple, quacks compound; crack-brained, or with deceit prepense; quacks and quackeries of all colors and kinds. How many Mesmerists, Magicians, Cabalists, Swedenborgians, Illuminati, Crucified Nuns, and Devils of Loudun! To which the Inquisition-Biographer adds Vampires, Sylphs, Rosicrucians, Freemasons, and an *Etcetera.* Consider your Schröpfers, Cagliostros, Casanovas, Saint-Germains, Dr. Grahams; the Chevalier d'Eon, Psalmanazar, Abbé Paris and the Ghost of Cock Lane! As if Bedlam had broken loose; as if, rather, in that "spiritual Twelfth-hour of the night," the everlasting Pit had opened itself, and from *its* still blacker bosom had issued Madness and all manner of shapeless Misbirths, to masquerade and chatter there.

But indeed, if we consider, how could it be otherwise?

In that stertorous last fever-sleep of our European world, must not Phantasms enough, born of the Pit, as all such *are*, flit past, in ghastly masquerading and chattering? A low scarce-audible moan (in Parliamentary Petitions, Meal-mobs, Popish Riots, Treatises on Atheism) struggles from the moribund sleeper; frees him not from his hellish guests and saturnalia: Phantasms these "of a dying brain." So too, when the old Roman world, the measure of its iniquities being full, was to expire, and (in still bitterer agonies) be born again, had they not Veneficæ, Mathematici, Apolloniuses with the Golden Thigh, Apollonius's Asses, and False Christs enough, — before a REDEEMER arose!

For, in truth, and altogether apart from such half-figurative language, Putrescence is not more naturally the scene of unclean creatures in the world physical, than Social Decay is of quacks in the world moral. Nay, look at it with the eye of the mere Logician, of the Political Economist. In such periods of Social Decay, what is called an overflowing Population, that is a Population which, under the old Captains of Industry (named Higher Classes, *Ricos Hombres*, Aristocracies and the like), can no longer find work and wages, increases the number of Unprofessionals, Lackalls, Social Nondescripts; with appetite of utmost keenness, which there is no known method of satisfying. Nay more, and perversely enough, ever as Population augments, your Captains of Industry can and do dwindle more and more into Captains of Idleness; whereby the more and more overflowing Population is worse and worse governed (shown *what to do*, for that is the only government): thus is the candle lighted at both ends; and the number of social Nondescripts increases in *double*-quick ratio. Whoso is alive, it is said, "must live;" at all events, will live; a task which daily gets harder, reduces to stranger shifts.

And now furthermore, with general economic distress, in such a Period, there is usually conjoined the utmost decay of moral principle: indeed, so universal is this conjunction, many men have seen it to be a concatenation and causation; justly enough, except that such have very generally, ever since a certain religious-repentant feeling went out of date, committed one sore mistake: what is vulgarly called putting the cart before the horse. Politico-economical benefactor of the species! deceive not thyself with barren sophisms: National suffering *is*, if thou wilt understand the words, verily a "judgment of God;" has ever been preceded by national crime. "Be it here once more maintained before the world," cries Sauerteig, in one of his *Springwurzeln*, "that temporal Distress, that Misery of any kind, is not the *cause* of Immorality, but the effect thereof! Among individuals, it is true, so wide is the empire of Chance, poverty and wealth go all at hap-hazard; a St. Paul is making tents at Corinth, while a Kaiser Nero fiddles, in ivory palaces, over a burning Rome. Nevertheless here too, if nowise wealth and poverty, yet well-being and ill-being, even in the temporal economic sense, go commonly in respective partnership with Wisdom and with Folly: no man can, for a length of time, be wholly wretched, if there is not a disharmony (a folly and wickedness) within himself; neither can the richest Crœsus and never so eupeptic (for he too has his indigestions, and dies at last of surfeit), be other than discontented, perplexed, unhappy, if he be a Fool." — This we apprehend is true, O Sauerteig, yet not the whole truth: for there is more than day's-work and day's-wages in this world of ours: which, as thou knowest, is itself quite other than a "Workshop and Fancy-Bazaar," is also a "Mystic Temple and Hall of Doom." Thus we have heard of such things as good men struggling with adversity, and offering a spectacle for the very gods.

"But with a nation," continues he, "where the multitude of the chances covers, in great measure, the uncertainty of Chance, it may be said to hold always that general Suffering is the fruit of general Misbehavior, general Dishonesty. Consider it well; had all men stood faithfully to their posts, the Evil, when it first rose, had been manfully fronted, and abolished, not lazily blinked, and left to grow, with the foul sluggard's comfort: 'It will last my time.' Thou foul sluggard, and even thief (*Faulenzer, ja Dieb*)! For art thou not a thief, to pocket thy day's-wages (be they counted in *groschen* or in gold thousands) for this, if it be for anything, for watching on thy special watch-tower that God's City (which this His World is, where His children dwell) suffer no damage; and, all the while, to watch only that thy own ease be not invaded, — let otherwise hard come to hard as it will and can? Unhappy! It will last thy time: thy worthless sham of an existence, wherein nothing but the Digestion was real, will have evaporated in the interim; it will last thy time: but will it last thy *Eternity?* Or what if it should *not* last thy time (mark that also, for that also will be the fate of *some* such lying sluggard), but take fire, and explode, and consume thee like the moth!"

The sum of the matter, in any case, is, that national Poverty and national Dishonesty go together; that continually increasing social Nondescripts get ever the hungrier, ever the falser. Now say, have we not here the very making of Quackery; raw-material, plastic-energy, both in full action? Dishonesty the raw-material, Hunger the plastic-energy: what will not the two realize? Nay observe farther how Dishonesty is the raw-material not of Quacks only, but also in great part of Dupes. In Goodness, were it never so simple, there is the surest instinct for the Good; the uneasiest unconquerable repulsion for the False and Bad. The very Devil Mephistopheles cannot deceive poor guileless Margaret: "it stands written on his brow that he never loved a living soul!" The like too has many a human inferior Quack painfully experienced; the like lies in store for our hero Beppo. But now with such abundant raw-material not only to make Quacks of, but to feed and occupy them on, if the plastic-energy of Hunger fail not, what a world shall we have! The wonder is not that the eighteenth century had very numerous Quacks, but rather that they were not innumerable.

In that same French Revolution alone, which burnt up so much, what unmeasured masses of Quackism were set fire to; nay, as foul mephitic fire-damp in that case, were made to flame in a fierce, sublime *splendor;* coruscating, even illuminating! The Count Saint-Germain, some twenty years later, had found a quite new element, of Fraternization, Sacred right of Insurrection, Oratorship of the Human Species, wherefrom to body himself forth quite otherwise: Schröpfer needed not now, as Blackguard undeterred, have solemnly shot himself in the *Rosenthal;* might have solemnly sacrificed himself, as Jacobin half-heroic, in the *Place de la Révolution.* For your quack-genius is indeed born, but also made; circumstances shape him or stunt him. Beppo Balsamo, born British in these new days, could have conjured fewer Spirits; yet had found a living and glory, as Castlereagh Spy, Irish Associationist, Blacking-Manufacturer, Book-Publisher, Able Editor. Withal too the reader will observe that Quacks, in every time, are of two sorts: the Declared Quack; and the Undeclared, who, if you question him, will deny stormfully, both to others and to himself; of which two quack-species the proportions vary with the varying capacity of the age. If Beppo's was the age of the Declared, therein, after all French Revolutions, we will grant, lay one of its main distinctions from ours; which is it not yet, and for a generation or two, the age of the Undeclared? Alas, almost a still more detestable age; — yet now (by God's grace), with Prophecy, with irreversible Enactment, registered in Heaven's chancery, — where *thou* too, if thou wilt *look*, mayst read and know, That its death-doom shall not linger. Be it speedy, be it sure! — And so herewith were our philosophical reflection, on the nature, causes, prevalence, decline and expected temporary destruction of Quackery, concluded; and now the Beppic poetic Narrative can once more take its course.

Beppo, then, like a Noah's Raven, is out upon that watery waste of dissolute, beduped, distracted European Life, to see if there is any carrion there. One unguided little Raven, in the wide-weltering "Mother of dead Dogs:" will he not come to harm; will he not be snapt up, drowned, starved and washed to the Devil there? No fear of him, — for a time. His eye (or scientific judgment), it is true, as yet takes in only a small section of it; but then his scent (instinct of genius) is prodigious: several endowments, forgery and others, he has unfolded into talents; the two sources of all quack-talent, Cunning and Impudence, are his in richest measure.

As to his immediate course of action and adventure, the foolish Inquisition-Biographer, it must be owned, shows himself a fool, and can give us next to no insight. Like enough, Beppo "fled to Messina;" simply as to the nearest city, and to get across to the mainland: but as to this "certain Althotas" whom he met there, and voyaged with to Alexandria in Egypt, and how they made hemp into silk, and realized much money, and came to Malta, and studied in the Laboratory there, and then the certain Althotas died, — of all this what shall be said? The foolish Inquisition-Biographer is uncertain whether the certain Althotas was a Greek or a Spaniard: but unhappily the prior question is not settled, whether he *was* at all. Superfluous it seems to put down Beppo's own account of his procedure; he gave multifarious accounts, as the exigencies of the case demanded: this of the "certain Althotas," and hemp made into false silk, is as verisimilar as that other of the "sage Althotas," the heirship-apparent of Trebisond, and the Scherif of Mecca's "Adieu, unfortunate Child of Nature." Nay the guesses of the ignorant world; how Count Cagliostro had been travelling-tutor to a Prince (name not given), whom he murdered and took the money from; with others of the like, — were perhaps still more absurd. Beppo, we can see, was out and away, — the Devil knew whither. Far, variegated, painful might his roamings be. A plausible-looking shadow of him shows itself hovering over Naples and Calabria; thither, as to a famed high-school of Laziness and Scoundrelism, he may likely enough have gone to graduate. Of the Malta Laboratory, and Alexandrian hemp-silk, the less we say the better. This only is clear: That Beppo dived deep down into the lugubrious-obscure regions of Rascaldom; like a Knight to the palace of his Fairy; remained unseen there, and returned thence armed at all points.

If we fancy, meanwhile, that Beppo already meditated becoming Grand Cophta, and riding at Strasburg in the Cardinal's carriage, we mistake much. Gift of Prophecy has been wisely denied to man. Did a man *foresee* his life, and not merely *hope* it, and grope it, and so, by Necessity and Free-will, make and fabricate it into a reality, he were no *man*, but some other kind of creature, superhuman or subterhuman. No man sees far; the most see no farther than their noses. From the quite dim uncertain mass of the future, "which lies there," says a Scottish Humorist, "uncombed, uncarded, like a mass of *tarry wool* proverbially *ill to spin*," they spin out, better or worse, their rumply, infirm thread of Existence, and wind it up, up, — till the spool is *full;* seeing but some little half-yard of it at once; exclaiming, as they look into the betarred entangled mass of Futurity, We *shall* see!

The first authentic fact with regard to Beppo is, that his swart squat figure becomes visible in the Corso and Campo Vaccino of Rome; that he "lodges at the Sign of the Sun in the Rotonda," and sells pen-drawings there. Properly they are not pen-drawings; but printed engravings or etchings, to which Beppo, with a pen and a little Indian ink, has added the degree of scratching to give them the air of such. Thereby mainly does he realize a thin livelihood. From which we infer that his transactions in Naples and Calabria, with Althotas and hemp-silk, or whatever else, had not turned to much.

Forged pen-drawings are no mine of wealth: neither was Beppo Balsamo anything of an Adonis; on the contrary, a most dusky, bull-necked, mastiff-faced, sinister-looking individual: nevertheless, on applying for the favor of the hand of Lorenza Feliciani, a beautiful Roman donzella, "dwelling near the Trinity of the Pilgrims," the unfortunate child of Nature prospers beyond our hopes. Authorities differ as to the rank and status of this fair Lorenza: one account says, she was the daughter of a Girdle-maker; but adds erroneously that it was in Calabria. The matter must remain suspended. Certain enough, she was a handsome buxom creature; "both pretty and lady-like," it is presumable; but having no offer, in a country too prone to celibacy, took up with the bull-necked forger of pen-drawings, whose suit too was doubtless pressed with the most flowing rhetoric. She gave herself in marriage to him; and the parents admitted him to quarter in their house, till it should appear what was next to be done.

Two kitchen-fires, says the Proverb, burn not on one hearth: here, moreover, might be quite special causes of discord. Pen-drawing, at best a hungry concern, has now exhausted itself, and must be given up; but Beppo's household prospects brighten, on the other side: in the charms of his Lorenza he sees before him what the French call "a Future confused and immense." The hint was given; and, with reluctance, or without reluctance (for the evidence leans *both* ways), was taken and reduced to practice: Signor and Signora Balsamo are forth from the old Girdler's house, into the wide world, seeking and finding adventures.

The foolish Inquisition-Biographer, with painful scientific accuracy, furnishes a descriptive catalogue of all the successive Cullies (Italian Counts, French Envoys, Spanish Marquises, Dukes and Drakes) in various quarters of the known world, whom this accomplished pair took in; with the sums each yielded, and the methods employed to bewitch him. Into which descriptive catalogue, why should we here so much as cast a glance? Cullies, the easy cushions on which knaves and knavesses repose and fatten, have at all times existed, in considerable profusion: neither can the fact of a clothed animal, Marquis or other, having acted in that capacity to never such lengths, entitle him to mention in History. We pass over these. Beppo, or as we must now learn to call him, the Count, appears at Venice, at Marseilles, at Madrid, Cadiz, Lisbon, Brussels; makes scientific pilgrimage to Quack Saint-Germain in Westphalia, religious-commercial to Saint Saint-James in Compostella, to Our Lady in Loretto: south, north, east, west, he shows himself; finds everywhere Lubricity and Stupidity (better or worse provided with cash), the two elements on which he thaumaturgically can work and live. Practice makes perfection; Beppo too was an apt scholar. By all methods he can awaken the stagnant imagination; cast maddening powder in the eyes.

Already in Rome he has cultivated whiskers, and put on the uniform of a Prussian Colonel: dame Lorenza is fair to look upon; but how much fairer, if by the air of distance and dignity you lend enchantment to her! In other places, the Count appears as real Count; as Marquis Pellegrini (lately from foreign parts); as Count this and Count that, Count Proteus-Incognito; finally as Count Alessandro Cagliostro.[1] Figure him shooting through the world with utmost rapidity; ducking under here, when the sword-fishes of Justice make a dart at him; ducking up yonder, in new shape, at the distance of a thousand miles; not unprovided with forged vouchers of respectability; above all, with that best voucher of respectability, a four-horse carriage, beef-eaters, and open purse, for Count Cagliostro has ready-money and pays his way. At some Hotel of the Sun, Hotel of the Angel, Gold Lion, or Green Goose, or whatever Hotel it is, in whatever world-famous capital City, his chariot-wheels have rested; sleep and food have refreshed his live-stock, chiefly the pearl and soul thereof, his indispensable Lorenza, now no longer Dame Lorenza, but Countess Seraphina, looking seraphic enough! Moneyed Donothings, whereof in this vexed Earth there are many, ever lounging about such places, scan and comment on the foreign coat-of-arms; ogle the fair foreign woman; who timidly recoils from their gaze, timidly responds to their reverences, as in halls and passages, they obsequiously throw themselves in her way: ere long one moneyed Donothing, from amid his tags and tassels, sword-belts, fop-tackle, frizzled hair without brains beneath it, is heard speaking to another: "Seen the Countess?—Divine creature that!"—and so the game is begun.

Let not the too sanguine reader, meanwhile, fancy that it is all holiday and heyday with his Lordship. The course of scoundrelism, any more than that of true love, never did run smooth. Seasons there may be when Count Proteus-Incognito has his epaulettes torn from his shoulders; his garment-skirts clipt close by the buttocks; and is bid sternly tarry at Jericho till his beard be grown. Harpies of Law defile his solemn feasts; his light burns languid; for a space seems utterly snuffed out, and dead in mal-odorous vapor. Dead only to blaze up the brighter! There is scoundrel-life in Beppo Cagliostro; cast him among the mud, tread him out of sight there, the miasmata do but stimulate and refresh him, he rises sneezing, is strong and young again.

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[1] Not altogether an *invention* this last; for his grand-uncle (a bell founder at Messina!) was actually surnamed *Cagliostro,* as well as named *Giuseppe.*—O. Y.

Behold him, for example, again in Palermo, after having seen many men and many lands; and how he again escapes thence. Why did he return to Palermo? Perhaps to astonish old friends by new grandeur; or for temporary shelter, if the Continent were getting hot for him; or perhaps in the mere way of general trade. He is seized there, and clapt in prison, for those foolish old businesses of the treasure-digging Goldsmith, of the forged Will.

"The manner of his escape," says one, whose few words on this obscure matter are so many light-points for us, "deserves to be described. The Son of one of the first Sicilian Princes, and great landed Proprietors (who moreover had filled important stations at the Neapolitan Court), was a person that united with a strong body and ungovernable temper all the tyrannical caprice, which the rich and great, without cultivation, think themselves entitled to exhibit.

"Donna Lorenza had contrived to gain this man; and on him the fictitious Marchese Pellegrini founded his security. The Prince testified openly that he was the protector of this stranger pair: but what was his fury when Joseph Balsamo, at the instance of those whom he had cheated, was cast into prison! He tried various means to deliver him; and as these would not prosper, he publicly, in the President's antechamber, threatened the plaintiffs' Advocate with the frightfulest misusage if the suit were not dropt, and Balsamo forthwith set at liberty. As the Advocate declined such proposal, he clutched him, beat him, threw him on the floor, trampled him with his feet, and could hardly be restrained from still farther outrages, when the President himself came running out at the tumult, and commanded peace.

"This latter, a weak, dependent man, made no attempt to punish the injurer; the plaintiffs and their Advocate grew faint-hearted; and Balsamo was let go; not so much as a registration in the Court-Books specifying his dismissal, who occasioned it, or how it took place." [1]

Thus sometimes, a friend in the court is better than a penny in the purse! Marchese Pellegrini "quickly thereafter left Palermo, and performed various travels, whereof my author could impart no clear information." Whether, or how far, the Game-chicken Prince went with him is not hinted.

So it might, at times, be quite otherwise than in coach-and-four that our Cagliostro journeyed. Occasionally we find him as outrider journeying on horseback; only Seraphina and her sop (whom she is to suck and eat) lolling on carriage-cushions; the hardy Count glad that hereby he can have the shot paid. Nay sometimes he looks utterly poverty-struck, and has to journey one knows not how. Thus one briefest but authentic-looking glimpse of him presents itself in England, in the year 1772: no Count is he here, but mere Signor Balsamo again; engaged in house-painting, for which he has a most peculiar talent. Was it true that he painted the country-house of "a Doctor Benemore;" and having not painted, but only smeared it, was refused payment, and got a lawsuit with expenses instead? If Doctor Benemore have left any representatives in this Earth, they are desired to speak out. We add only, that if young Beppo had one of the prettiest wives, old Benemore had one of the ugliest daughters; and so, putting one thing to another, matters might not be so bad.

For it is to be observed, that the Count, on his own side, even in his days of highest splendor, is not idle. Faded dames of quality have many wants: the Count has not studied in the convent Laboratory, or pilgrimed to the Count Saint-Germain, in Westphalia, to no purpose. With loftiest condescension he stoops to impart somewhat of his supernatural secrets, — for a consideration. Rowland's Kalydor is valuable; but what to the Beautifying-water of Count Alessandro! He that will undertake to smooth wrinkles, and make withered green parchment into a fair carnation skin, is he not one whom faded dames of quality will delight to honor? Or again, let the Beautifying-water succeed or not, have not such dames, if calumny may be in aught believed, *another* want? This want, too, the indefatigable Cagliostro will supply, — for a consideration. For faded gentlemen of quality the Count likewise has help. Not a charming Countess alone; but a "Wine of Egypt" (cantharides not being unknown to him), sold in drops, more precious than nectar; which what faded gentleman of quality would not purchase with anything short of life? Consider now what may be done with potions, washes, charms, love-philtres, among a class of mortals, idle from the mother's womb; rejoicing to be taught the Ionic dances, and meditating of love from their tender nails!

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[1] Goethe's *Werke*, b. xxviii. 132.

Thus waxing, waning, broad-shining, or extinct, an inconstant but unwearied Moon, rides on its course the Cagliostric star. Thus are Count and Countess busy in their vocation; thus do they spend the golden season of their youth, — shall we say, "for the Greatest Happiness of the greatest number"? Happy enough, had there been no sumptuary or adultery or swindlery Law-acts; no Heaven above, no Hell beneath; no flight of Time, and gloomy land of Eld and Destitution and Desperation, towards which, by law of Fate, they see themselves, at all moments, with frightful regularity, unaidably drifting.

The prudent man provides against the inevitable. Already Count Cagliostro, with his love-philtres, his cantharidic Wine of Egypt; nay far earlier, by his blue-flames and divining-rods, as with the poor sheep Goldsmith of Palermo; and ever since, by many a significant hint thrown out where the scene suited, — has dabbled in the Supernatural. As his seraphic Countess gives signs of withering, and one luxuriant branch of industry will die and drop off, others must be pushed into budding. Whether it was in England during what he called his "first visit" in the year 1776 (for the before-first, house-smearing visit was, reason or none, to go for nothing) that he first thought of Prophecy as a trade, is unknown: certain enough, he had begun to practise it then; and this indeed not without a glimpse of insight into the English national character. Various, truly, are the pursuits of mankind; whereon they would fain, unfolding the future, take Destiny by surprise: with us, however, as a nation of shopkeepers, they may be all said to centre in this one, *Put money in thy purse!* Oh for a Fortunatus'-Pocket, with its ever-new coined gold; — if, indeed, the true prayer were not rather: Oh for a Crassus'-Drink, of *liquid* gold, that so the accursed throat of Avarice might for once have enough and to spare! Meanwhile whoso should engage, keeping clear of the gallows, to teach men the secret of making money, were not he a Professor sure of audience? Strong were the general Scepticism; still stronger the general Need and Greed. Count Cagliostro, from his residence in Whitcombe Street, it is clear, had looked into the mysteries of the Little-go; by occult science knew the lucky number. Bish as yet was not; but Lotteries were; gulls also were. The Count has his Language-master, his Portuguese Jew, his nondescript Ex-Jesuits, whom he puts forth as antennæ, into coffee-houses, to stir up the minds of men. "Lord" Scott (a swindler swindled), and Miss Fry, and many others, were they here, could tell what it cost them: nay, the very Lawbooks, and Lord Mansfield and Mr. Howarth speak of hundreds, and jewel-boxes, and quite handsome booties. Thus can the bustard pluck geese, and, if Law do get the carcass, live upon their giblets; — now and then, however, finds a vulture, too tough to pluck.

The attentive reader is no doubt curious to understand all the What and the How of Cagliostro's procedure while England was the scene. As we too are, and have been; but unhappily all in vain. To that English *Life* of uncertain gender none, as was said, need in their utmost extremity repair. Scarcely the very lodging of Cagliostro can be ascertained; except incidentally that it was once in Whitcombe Street; for a few days, in Warwick Court, Holborn; finally, for some space, in the King's Bench Jail. Vain were it, meanwhile, for any reverencer of genius to pilgrim thither, seeking memorials of a great man. Cagliostro is clean gone: on the strictest search, no token never so faint discloses itself. He went, and left nothing behind him; — except perhaps a few cast-clothes, and other inevitable exuviæ, long since, not indeed annihilated (this nothing can be), yet beaten into mud, and spread as new soil over the general surface of Middlesex and Surrey; floated by the Thames into old Ocean; or flitting, the gaseous parts of them, in the universal Atmosphere, borne thereby to remotest corners of the Earth, or beyond the limits of the Solar System! So fleeting is the track and habitation of man; so wondrous the stuff he builds of; his house, his very house of houses (what we call his *body*), were he the first of geniuses, will evaporate in the strangest manner, and vanish even whither we have said.

To us on our side, however, it is cheering to discover, for one thing, that Cagliostro found antagonists worthy of him: the bustard plucking geese, and living on their giblets, found not our whole Island peopled with geese, but here and there, as above hinted, with vultures, with hawks of still sharper quality than his. Priddle, Aylett, Saunders, O'Reilly: let these stand forth as the vindicators of English national character. By whom Count Alessandro Cagliostro, as in dim fluctuating outline indubitably appears, was bewritted, arrested, fleeced, hatchelled, bewildered and bedevilled, till the very Jail of King's Bench seemed a refuge from them. A wholly obscure contest, as was natural; wherein, however, to all candid eyes the vulturous and falconish character of our Isle fully asserts itself; and the foreign Quack of Quacks, with all his thaumaturgic Hemp-silks, Lottery-numbers, Beauty-waters, Seductions, Phosphorus-boxes, and Wines of Egypt, is seen matched, and nigh throttled, by the natural unassisted cunning of English Attorneys. Whereupon the bustard, feeling himself so pecked and plucked, takes wing, and flies to foreign parts.

One good thing he has carried with him, notwithstanding: initiation into some primary arcana of Freemasonry. The Quack of Quacks, with his primitive bias towards the supernatural-mystificatory, must long have had his eye on Masonry; which, with its blazonry and mummery, sashes, drawn sabres, brothers Terrible, brothers Venerable (the whole so imposing by candle-light), offered the choicest element for him. All men profit by *Union* with men; the quack as much as another; nay in these two words, *Sworn Secrecy*, alone has he not found a very talisman! Cagliostro, then, determines on Masonship. It was afterwards urged that the Lodge to which he and his Seraphina got admission, for she also was made a Mason, or Masoness, and had a ribbon-garter solemnly bound on, with order to sleep in it for a night, — was a Lodge of low rank in the social scale; numbering not a few of the pastrycook and hair-dresser species. To which it could only be replied, that these alone spoke French; that a man and mason, though he cooked pastry, was still a man and mason. Be this as it might, the apt Recipiendary is rapidly promoted through the three grades of Apprentice, Companion, Master; at the cost of five guineas. That of his being first raised into the air, by means of a rope and pulley fixed in the ceiling, "during which the heavy mass of his body must assuredly have caused him a dolorous sensation;" and then being forced blindfold to shoot himself (though with privily *dis*loaded pistol), in sign of courage and obedience: all this we can esteem an apocrypha, — palmed on the Roman Inquisition, otherwise prone to delusion. Five guineas, and some foolish froth-speeches, delivered over liquor and otherwise, was the cost. If you ask now, In *what* London Lodge was it? Alas, we know not, and shall never know. Certain only that Count Alessandro *is* a master-mason; that having once crossed the threshold, his plastic genius will not stop there. Behold, accordingly, he has bought from a "Bookseller" certain manuscripts belonging to "one George Cofton, a man absolutely unknown to him" and to us, which treat of the "Egyptian Masonry"! In other words, Count Alessandro will *blow* with his new five-guinea bellows; having always occasion to raise the wind.

With regard specially to that huge soap-bubble of an Egyptian Masonry which he blew, and as conjurer caught many flies with, it is our painful duty to say a little; not much. The Inquisition-Biographer, with deadly fear of heretical and democratical and black-magical Freemasons before his eyes, has gone into the matter to boundless depths; commenting, elucidating, even confuting: a certain expository masonic Order-Book of Cagliostro's, which he has laid hand on, opens the whole mystery to him. The ideas he declares to be Cagliostro's; the composition all a Disciple's, for the Count had no gift that way. What, then, does the Disciple set forth,— or, at lowest, the Inquisition-Biographer say that he sets forth? Much, much that is not to the point.

Understand, however, that once inspired, by the absolutely unknown George Cofton, with the notion of Egyptian Masonry, wherein as yet lay much "magic and superstition," Count Alessandro resolves to free it of these impious ingredients, and make it a kind of Last Evangel, or Renovator of the Universe, — which so needed renovation. "As he did not believe anything in matter of Faith," says our wooden Familiar, "nothing could arrest him." True enough: how did he move along, then; to what length did he go?

"In his system, he promises his followers to conduct them to *perfection*, by means of a *physical and moral regeneration;* to enable them by the former (or physical) to find the *prime matter*, or Philosopher's Stone, and the *acacia* which consolidates in man the forces of the most vigorous youth, and renders him immortal; and by the latter (or moral) to procure them a Pentagon, which shall restore man to his primitive state of innocence, lost by original sin. The Founder supposes that this Egyptian Masonry was instituted by Enoch and Elias, who propagated it in different parts of the world: however, in time, it lost much of its purity and splendor. And so, by degrees, the Masonry of men had been reduced to pure buffoonery; and that of women been almost entirely destroyed, having now for most part no place in common Masonry. Till at last, the zeal of the *Grand Cophta* (so are the High-priests of Egypt named) had signalized itself by restoring the Masonry of both sexes to its pristine lustre."

With regard to the great question of constructing this invaluable Pentagon, which is to abolish Original Sin: how you have to choose a solitary mountain, and call it Sinai; and build a Pavilion on it to be named Sion, with twelve sides, in every side a window, and three stories, one of which is named Ararat; and there, with Twelve Masters, each at a window, yourself in the middle of them, to go through unspeakable formalities, vigils, removals, fasts, toils, distresses, and hardly get your Pentagon after all, — with regard to this great question and construction, we shall say nothing. As little concerning the still grander and painfuler process of Physical Regeneration, or growing young again; a thing not to be accomplished without a forty-days course of medicine, purgations, sweating-baths, fainting-fits, root-diet, phlebotomy, starvation and desperation, more perhaps than it is all worth. Leaving these interior solemnities, and many high moral precepts of union, virtue, wisdom, and doctrines of immortality and what not, will the reader care to cast an indifferent glance on certain esoteric ceremonial parts of this Egyptian Masonry, — as the Inquisition-Biographer, if we miscellaneously cull from him, may enable us?

"In all these ceremonial parts," huskily avers the wooden Biographer, "you find as much sacrilege, profanation, superstition and idolatry, as in common Masonry: invocations of the holy Name, prosternations, adorations lavished on the Venerable, or head of the Lodge; aspirations, insufflations, incense-burnings, fumigations, exorcisms of the Candidates and the garments they are to take; emblems of the sacrosanct Triad, of the Moon, of the Sun, of the Compass, Square, and a thousand-thousand other iniquities and ineptitudes, which are now well known in the world."

"We above made mention of the Grand Cophta. By this title has been designated the founder or restorer of Egyptian Masonry. Cagliostro made no difficulty in admitting [to me the Inquisitor] that under such name he was himself meant: now in this system the Grand Cophta is compared to the Highest: the most solemn acts of worship are paid him; he has authority over the Angels; he is invoked on all occasions; everything is done in virtue of his power; which you are assured he derives immediately from God. Nay more: among the various rites observed in this exercise of Masonry, you are ordered to recite the *Veni Creator spiritus*, the *Te Deum*, and some Psalms of David: to such an excess is impudence and audacity carried, that in the Psalm, *Memento, Domine, David et omnis mansuetudinis ejus*, every time the name David occurs, that of the Grand Cophta is to be substituted.

"No Religion is excluded from the Egyptian Society: the Jew, the Calvinist, the Lutheran, can be admitted equally well with the Catholic, if so be they admit the existence of God and the immortality of the soul." "The men elevated to the rank of master take the names of the ancient Prophets; the women those of the Sibyls.

. . . "Then the grand Mistress blows on the face of the female Recipiendary, all along from brow to chin, and says: 'I give you this breath, to cause to germinate and become alive in your heart the Truth which we possess; to fortify in you the' &c. &c. 'Guardian of the new Knowledge which we prepare to make you partake of, by the sacred names of *Helios, Mene, Tetragrammaton.*'

"In the *Essai sur les Illuminés,* printed at Paris in 1789, I read that these latter words were suggested to Cagliostro as Arabic or Sacred ones by a Sleight-of-hand Man, who said that he was assisted by a spirit, and added that this spirit was the Soul of a Cabalist Jew, who by art-magic had killed his pig before the Christian Advent.

. . . "They take a young lad, or a girl who is in the state of innocence, such they call the *Pupil* or the *Columb;* the Venerable communicates to him the power he would have had before the Fall of Man; which power consists mainly in commanding the pure Spirits; these Spirits are to the number of seven: it is said they surround the Throne; and that they govern the Seven Planets: their names are Anael, Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, Uriel, Zobiachel, Anachiel."

Or would the reader wish to see this *Columb* in action? She can act in two ways; either behind a curtain, behind a hieroglyphically painted Screen with "table and three candles;" or as here "before the Caraffe," and showing face. If the miracle fail, it can only be because she is not "in the state of innocence," — an accident much to be guarded against. This scene is at Mittau in Courland; — we find, indeed, that it is a *Pupil* affair, not a *Columb* one; but for the rest, that is perfectly indifferent: —

"Cagliostro accordingly (it is his own story still) brought a little Boy into the Lodge; son of a nobleman there. He placed him on his knees before a table, whereon stood a Bottle of pure water, and behind this some lighted candles: he made an exorcism round the Boy, put his hand on his head: and both, in this attitude, addressed their prayers to God for the happy accomplishment of the work. Having then bid the child look into the Bottle, directly the child cried that he saw a garden. Knowing hereby that Heaven assisted him, Cagliostro took courage, and bade the child ask of God the grace to see the Angel Michael. At first the child said: 'I see something white; I know not what it is.' Then he began jumping, stamping like a possessed creature, and cried: 'There now! I see a child, like myself, that seems to have something angelical.' All the assembly, and Cagliostro himself, remained speechless with emotion. . . . The child being anew exorcised, with the hands of the Venerable on his head, and the customary prayers addressed to Heaven, he looked into the Bottle, and said, he saw his Sister at that moment coming down-stairs, and embracing one of her brothers. That appeared impossible, the brother in question being then hundreds of miles off: however, Cagliostro felt not disconcerted; said they might send to the country-house where the sister was, and see."[1]

Wonderful enough. Here, however, a fact rather suddenly transpires, which, as the Inquisition-Biographer well urges, must serve to undeceive all believers in Cagliostro; at least, call a blush into their cheeks. It seems: "The Grand Cophta, the restorer, the propagator of Egyptian Masonry, Count Cagliostro himself, testifies, in most part of his System, the profoundest respect for the Patriarch Moses: *and yet* this same Cagliostro affirmed before his judges that he had always felt the insurmountablest antipathy to Moses; and attributes this hatred to his constant opinion, that Moses was a thief for having carried off the Egyptian vessels; which opinion, in spite of all the luminous arguments that were opposed to him to show how erroneous it was, he has continued to hold with an invincible obstinacy!" How reconcile these two inconsistencies? Ay, how?

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[1] *Vie de Joseph Balsamo, traduite d'après l'original Italien,* ch. ii. iii. (Paris, 1791.)

But to finish off this Egyptian Masonic business, and bring it all to a focus, we shall now, for the first and for the last time, peep one moment through the spy-glass of Monsieur de Luchet, in that *Essai sur les Illuminés* of his. The whole matter being so much of a chimera, how can it be painted otherwise than chimerically? Of the following passage one thing is true, that a creature of the seed of Adam believed it to be true. List, list, then; oh list!

"The Recipiendary is led by a darksome path, into an immense hall, the ceiling, the walls, the floor of which are covered by a black cloth, sprinkled over with red flames and menacing serpents: three sepulchral lamps emit, from time to time, a dying glimmer; and the eye half distinguishes, in this lugubrious den, certain wrecks of mortality suspended by funereal crapes: a heap of skeletons forms in the centre a sort of altar; on both sides of it are piled books; some contain menaces against the perjured; others the deadly narrative of the vengeances which the Invisible Spirit has exacted; of the infernal evocations for a long time pronounced in vain.

"Eight hours elapse. Then Phantoms, trailing mortuary veils, slowly cross the hall, and sink in caverns, without audible noise of trap-doors or of falling. You notice only that they are gone, by a fetid odor exhaled from them.

"The Novice remains four-and-twenty hours in this gloomy abode, in the midst of a freezing silence. A rigorous fast has already weakened his thinking faculties. Liquors, prepared for the purpose, first weary, and at length wear out his senses. At his feet are placed three cups, filled with a drink of greenish color. Necessity lifts them towards his lips; involuntary fear repels them.

"At last appear two men; looked upon as the ministers of death. These gird the pale brow of the Recipiendary with an auroral-colored ribbon, dipt in blood, and full of silvered characters mixed with the figure of Our Lady of Loretto. He receives a copper crucifix, of two inches length; to his neck are hung a sort of amulets, wrapped in violet cloth. He is stript of his clothes; which two ministering brethren deposit on a funeral pile, erected at the other end of the hall. With blood, on his naked body, are traced crosses. In this state of suffering and humiliation, he sees approaching with large strides five Phantoms, armed with swords, and clad in garments dropping blood. Their faces are veiled: they spread a carpet on the floor; kneel there; pray; and remain with outstretched hands crossed on their breast, and face fixed on the ground, in deep silence. An hour passes in this painful attitude. After which fatiguing trial, plaintive cries are heard; the funeral pile takes fire, yet casts only a pale light; the garments are thrown on it and burnt. A colossal and almost transparent Figure rises from the very bosom of the pile. At sight of it, the five prostrated men fall into convulsions insupportable to look on; the too faithful image of those foaming struggles wherein a mortal, at hand-grips with a sudden pain, ends by sinking under it.

"Then a trembling voice pierces the vault, and articulates the formula of those execrable oaths that are to be sworn: my pen falters; I think myself almost guilty to retrace them."

O Luchet, what a taking! Is there no hope left, thinkest thou? Thy brain is all gone to addled albumen; help seems none, if not in that last mother's-bosom of all the ruined: Brandy-and-water! — An unfeeling world may laugh; but ought to recollect that, forty years ago, these things were sad realities, — in the heads of many men.

As to the execrable oaths, this seems the main one: "Honor and respect *Aqua Toffana*, as a sure, prompt and necessary means of purging the Globe, by the death or the hebetation of such as endeavor to debase the Truth, or snatch it from our hands." And so the catastrophe ends by bathing our poor half-dead Recipiendary first in blood, then, after some genuflexions, in water; and "serving him a repast composed of roots," — we grieve to say, mere potatoes-and-point!

Figure now all this boundless cunningly devised Agglomerate of royal-arches, death's-heads, hieroglyphically painted screens, *Columbs* in the state of innocence; with spacious masonic halls, dark, or in the favorablest theatrical light-and-dark; Kircher's magic-lantern, Belshazzar handwritings, of phosphorus: "plaintive tones," gong-beatings; hoary beard of a supernatural Grand Cophta emerging from the gloom; — and how it acts, not only indirectly through the foolish senses of men, but directly on their Imagination; connecting itself with Enoch and Elias, with Philanthropy, Immortality, Eleutheromania, and Adam Weisshaupt's Illuminati, and so downwards to the infinite Deep: figure all this; and in the centre of it, sitting eager and alert, the skilfulest Panourgos, working the mighty chaos, into a creation — of ready-money. In such a wide plastic ocean of sham and foam had the Arch-quack now happily begun to envelop himself.

Accordingly he goes forth prospering and to prosper. Arrived in any City, he has but by masonic grip to accredit himself with the Venerable of the place; and, not by degrees as formerly, but in a single night, is introduced in Grand Lodge to all that is fattest and foolishest far or near; and in the fittest arena, a gilt-pasteboard Masonic hall. There between the two pillars of Jachin and Boaz, can the great Sheepstealer see his whole flock of Dupables assembled in one penfold; affectionately blatant, licking the hand they are to bleed by. Victorious Acharat-Beppo! The genius of Amazement, moreover, has now shed her glory round him; he is radiant-headed, a supernatural by his very gait. Behold him everywhere welcomed with vivats, or in awe-struck silence: gilt-pasteboard Freemasons receive him under the Steel-Arch of crossed sabres; he mounts to the Seat of the Venerable; holds high discourse hours long, on Masonry, Morality, Universal Science, Divinity, and Things in general, with "a sublimity, an emphasis and unction," proceeding, it appears, "from the special inspiration of the Holy Ghost." Then there are Egyptian Lodges to be founded, corresponded with, — a thing involving expense; elementary fractions of many a priceless arcanum, nay if the place will stand it, of the Pentagon itself, can be given to the purified in life: how gladly would he *give* them, but they have to be brought from the uttermost ends of the world, and cost money. Now too, with what tenfold impetuosity do all the old trades of Egyptian Drops, Beauty-waters, Secret-favors, expand themselves, and rise in price! Life-weary moneyed Donothing, this seraphic Countess is Grand Priestess of the Egyptian Female Lodges; has a touch of the supramundane Undine in her: among all thy intrigues, hadst thou ever yet Endymion-like an intrigue with the lunar Diana, — called also Hecate? And thou, O antique, much-loving faded Dowager, *this* Squire-of-dames can, it appears probable, command the Seven Angels, Uriel, Anachiel and Company; at lowest, has the eyes of all Europe fixed on him! — The dog pockets money enough, and can seem to despise money.

To us, much meditating on the matter, it seemed perhaps strangest of all, how Count Cagliostro, received under the Steel Arch, could hold Discourses, of from one to three hours long, on Universal Science, of such unction, we do not say as to seem inspired by the Holy Spirit, but as not to get him lugged out of doors directly after his first head of method, and drowned in whole oceans of salt-and-water. The man could not speak; only babble in long-winded diffusions, chaotic circumvolutions tending no-whither. He had no thought for speaking with; he had not even a language. His Sicilian Italian, and Laquais-de-place French, garnished with shreds from all European dialects, was wholly intelligible to no mortal; a Tower-of-Babel jargon, which made many think him a kind of Jew. But indeed, with the language of Greeks, or of Angels, what better were it? The man, once for all, has no articulate utterance; that tongue of his emits noises enough, but no speech. Let him begin the plainest story, his stream stagnates at the first stage; chafes, "ahem! ahem!" loses itself in the earth; or, bursting over, flies abroad without bank or channel, — into separate plashes. Not a stream, but a lake, a wide-spread indefinite marsh. His whole thought is confused, inextricable; what thought, what resemblance of thought he has, cannot deliver itself, except in gasps, blustering gushes, spasmodic refluences, which make bad worse. Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble: how thou bubblest, foolish "Bubblyjock"! Hear him once, and on a dead-lift occasion, as the Inquisition Gurney reports it: —

"'I mean and I wish to mean, that even as those who honor their father and mother, and respect the sovereign Pontiff, are blessed of God; even so all that I did, I did it by the order of God, with the power which he vouchsafed me, and to the advantage of God and of Holy Church; and I mean to give the proofs of all that I have done and said, not only physically but morally, by showing that as I have served God for God and by the power of God, he has given me at last the counter-poison to confound and combat Hell; for I know no other enemies than those that are in Hell, and if I am wrong, the Holy Father will punish me; if I am right, he will reward me; and if the Holy Father could get into his hands to-night these answers of mine, I predict to all brethren, believers and unbelievers, that I should be at liberty to-morrow morning.' Being desired to give these proofs then, he answered: 'To prove that I have been chosen of God as an apostle to defend and propagate religion, I say that as the Holy Church has instituted pastors to demonstrate in face of the world that she is the true Catholic faith, even so, having operated with approbation and by the counsel of pastors of the Holy Church, I am, as I said, fully justified in regard to all my operations; and these pastors have assured me that my Egyptian Order was divine, and deserved to be formed into an Order sanctioned by the Holy Father, as I said in another interrogatory.'"

How then in the name of wonder, said we, could such a babbling, bubbling Turkey-cock speak "with unction"?

Two things here are to be taken into account. First, the difference between speaking and public speaking; a difference altogether generic. Secondly, the wonderful power of a certain audacity, often named impudence. Was it never thy hard fortune, good Reader, to attend any Meeting convened for Public purposes; any Bible-Society, Reform, Conservative, Thatched-Tavern, Hogg Dinner, or other such Meeting? Thou hast seen some full-fed Long-ear, by free determination or on sweet constraint, start to his legs, and give voice. Well aware wert thou that there was not, had not been, could not be, in that entire ass-cranium of his any fraction of an idea: nevertheless mark him. If at first an ominous haze flit round, and nothing, not even nonsense, dwell in his recollection, — heed it not; let him but plunge desperately on, the spell is broken. Commonplaces enough are at hand: "labor of love," "rights of suffering millions," "throne and altar," "divine gift of song," or what else it may be: the Meeting, by its very *name*, has environed itself in a given element of Commonplace. But anon, behold how his talking-organs get heated, and the friction vanishes; cheers, applauses, with the previous dinner and strong drink, raise him to height of noblest temper. And now, as for your vociferous Dullard is easiest of all, let him keep on the soft, safe *parallel* course; parallel to the Truth, or nearly so; for Heaven's sake, not in *contact* with it: no obstacle will meet him; on the favoring given element of Commonplace he triumphantly careers.

He is as the ass, whom you took and cast headlong into the water: the water at first threatens to swallow him; but he finds, to his astonishment, that he can *swim* therein, that it is buoyant and bears him along. One sole condition is indispensable: audacity, vulgarly called impudence. Our ass must *commit* himself to his watery "element;" in free daring, strike forth his four limbs from him: then shall he not drown and sink, but shoot gloriously forward, and swim, to the admiration of by-standers. The ass, safe landed on the other bank, shakes his rough hide, wonder-struck himself at the faculty that lay in him, and waves joyfully his long ears: so too the public speaker. Cagliostro, as we know him of old, is not without a certain blubbery oiliness of soul as of body, with vehemence lying under it; has the volublest, noisiest tongue; and in the audacity vulgarly called impudence is without a fellow. The Commonplaces of such Steel-Arch Meetings are soon at his finger-ends: that same blubbery oiliness, and vehemence lying under it, once give them an element and stimulus, are the very gift of a fluent public speaker — to Dupables.

Here too let us mention a circumstance, not insignificant, if true, which it may readily enough be. In younger years, Beppo Balsamo once, it is recorded, took some pains to procure, "from a country vicar," under quite false pretences, "a bit of cotton steeped in holy oils." What could such bit of cotton steeped in holy oils do for him? An Unbeliever from any basis of conviction the unbelieving Beppo could never be; but solely from stupidity and bad morals. Might there not lie in that chaotic blubbery nature of his, at the bottom of all, a certain musk-grain of real Superstitious Belief? How wonderfully such a musk-grain of Belief will flavor, and impregnate with seductive odor, a whole inward world of Quackery, so that every fibre thereof shall smell *musk*, is well known. No Quack can persuade like him who has himself some persuasion. Nay, so wondrous is the act of Believing, Deception and Self-deception must, rigorously speaking, co-exist in all Quacks; and he perhaps were definable as the best Quack, in whom the smallest musk-grain of the latter would sufficiently flavor the largest mass of the former.

But indeed, as we know otherwise, was there not in Cagliostro a certain pinchbeck counterfeit of all that is golden and good in man, of somewhat even that is best? Cheers, and illuminated hieroglyphs, and the ravishment of thronging audiences, can make him maudlin; his very wickedness of practice will render him louder in eloquence of theory; and "philanthropy," "divine science," "depth of unknown worlds," "finer feelings of the heart," and such like shall draw tears from most asses of sensibility. Neither, indeed, is it of moment how *few* his elementary Commonplaces are, how empty his head is, so he but agitate it well: thus a lead-drop or two, put into the emptiest dry-bladder, and jingled to and fro, will make noise enough; and even, if skilfully jingled, a kind of martial music.

Such is the Cagliostric palaver, that bewitches all manner of believing souls. If the ancient Father was named Chrysostom, or Mouth-of-Gold, be the modern Quack named Pinchbeckostom, or Mouth-of-Pinchbeck; in an Age of Bronze such metal finds elective affinities. On the whole, too, it is worth considering what element your Quack specially works in: the element of Wonder! The Genuine, be he artist or artisan, works in the finitude of the Known; the Quack in the infinitude of the Unknown. And then how, in rapidest progression, he grows and advances, once start him! Your name is up, says the adage; you may lie in bed. A nimbus of renown and preternatural astonishment envelops Cagliostro; enchants the general eye. The few reasoning mortals scattered here and there who see through him, deafened in the universal hubbub, shut their lips in sorrowful disdain; confident in the grand remedy, Time. The Enchanter meanwhile rolls on his way; what boundless materials of Deceptibility, what greediness and ignorance, especially what prurient brute-mindedness, exist over Europe in this the most deceivable of modern ages, are stirred up, fermenting in his behoof. He careers onward as a Comet; his nucleus, of paying and praising Dupes, embraces, in long radius, what city and province he rests over; his thinner tail, of wondering and curious Dupes, stretches into remotest lands. Good Lavater, from amid his Swiss Mountains, could say of him: "Cagliostro, a man; and a man such as few are; in whom, however, I am not a believer. Oh that he were simple of heart and humble, like a child; that he had feeling for the simplicity of the Gospel, and the majesty of the Lord (*Hoheit des Herrn*)! Who were so great as he? Cagliostro often tells what is not true, and promises what he does not perform. Yet do I nowise hold his operations as deception, though they are not what he calls them."[1] If good Lavater could so say of him, what must others have been saying!

Comet-wise, progressing with loud flourish of kettle-drums, everywhere under the Steel-Arch, evoking spirits, transmuting metals (to such as could stand it), the Archquack has traversed Saxony; at Leipzig has run athwart the hawser of a brother quack (poor Schröpfer, here scarcely recognizable as "*Scieffert*"), and wrecked him. Through Eastern Germany, Prussian Poland, he progresses; and so now at length, in the spring of 1780, has arrived at Petersburg. His pavilion is erected here, his flag prosperously hoisted: Mason-lodges have long ears; he is distributing, as has now become his wont, Spagiric Food, medicine for the poor; a train-oil Prince, Potemkin or something like him, for accounts are dubious, feels his chops water over a seraphic Seraphina: all goes merry, and promises the best. But in those despotic countries, the Police is so arbitrary! Cagliostro's thaumaturgy must be overhauled by the

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[1] *Lettre du Comte Mirabeau sur Cagliostro et Lavater*, p. 42. (Berlin, 1786.)

Empress's Physician (Mouncey, a hard Annandale Scot); is found nought, the Spagiric Food unfit for a dog: and so, the whole particulars of his Lordship's conduct being put together, the result is, that he must leave Petersburg, in a given brief term of hours. Happy for him that it was so brief: scarcely is he gone, till the Prussian Ambassador appears with a complaint, that he has falsely assumed the Prussian uniform at Rome; the Spanish Ambassador with a still graver complaint, that he has forged bills at Cadiz. However, he is safe over the marches: let them complain their fill.

In Courland, and in Poland, great things await him; yet not unalloyed by two small reverses. The famed Countess von der Reeke, a born Fair Saint, what the Germans call *Schöne Seele,* as yet quite young in heart and experience, but broken down with grief for departed friends, — seeks to question the world-famous Spirit-summoner on the secrets of the Invisible Kingdoms; whither, with fond strained eyes, she is incessantly looking. The *galimathias* of Pinchbeckostom cannot impose on this pure-minded simple woman: she recognizes the Quack in him, and in a printed Book makes known the same: Mephisto's mortifying experience with Margaret, as above foretold, renews itself for Cagliostro.[1] At Warsaw too, though he discourses on Egyptian Masonry, on Medical Philosophy, and the ignorance of Doctors, and performs successfully with *Pupil* and *Columb,* a certain "Count M." cherishes more than doubt; which ends in certainty, in a written *Cagliostro Unmasked.* The Archquack, triumphant, sumptuously feasted in the city, has retired with a chosen set of believers, with whom, however, was this unbelieving "M.," into the country; to transmute metals, to prepare perhaps the Pentagon itself. All that night, before leaving Warsaw, "our dear master" had spent conversing with spirits. Spirits? cries "M.:" Not he; but melting ducats: he has a melted mass of them in this crucible, which now, by sleight of hand, he would fain substitute for that other, filled, as you all saw, with red-lead, carefully luted down, smelted, set to cool, smuggled from among our hands, and now (look at it, ye asses!) — found broken and hidden among these bushes!

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[1] *Zeitgenossen,* No. 15. § *Frau von der Recke.*

Neither does the Pentagon, or Elixir of Life, or whatever it was, prosper better. "Our sweet Master enters into expostulation:" "swears by his great God, and his honor, that he will finish the work and make us happy. He carries his modesty so far as to propose that he shall work with chains on his feet; and consents to lose his life, by the hands of his disciples, if before the end of the *fourth passage*, his word be not made good. He lays his hand on the ground, and kisses it; holds it up to Heaven, and again takes God to witness that he speaks true; calls on Him to exterminate him if he lies." A vision of the hoary-bearded Grand Cophta himself makes night solemn. In vain! The sherds of that broken red-lead crucible, which pretends to stand here unbroken half-full of silver, lie *there*, before your eyes: that "resemblance of a sleeping child," grown visible in the magic cooking of our Elixir, proves to be an inserted rosemary-leaf; the Grand Cophta cannot be gone too soon.

Count "M.," balancing towards the opposite extreme, even thinks him inadequate as a Quack:—

"Far from being modest," says this Unmasker, "he brags beyond expression, in anybody's presence, especially in women's, of the grand faculties he possesses. Every word is an exaggeration, or a statement you feel to be improbable. The smallest contradiction puts him in fury: his vanity breaks through on all sides; he lets you give him a festival that sets the whole city a-talking. Most impostors are supple, and endeavor to gain friends. This one, you might say, studies to appear arrogant, to make all men enemies, by his rude injurious speeches, by the squabbles and grudges he introduces among friends." "He quarrels with his coadjutors for trifles; fancies that a simple giving of the lie will persuade the public that they are liars." "Schröpfer at Leipzig was far cleverer." "He should get some ventriloquist for assistant: should read some Books of Chemistry; study the Tricks of Philadelphia and Comus."[1]

Fair advices, good "M.;" but do not you yourself admit that he has a "natural genius for deception;" above all things "a forehead of brass (*front d'airain*), which nothing can dis-concert"? To such a genius, and such a brow, Comus and Philadelphia, and all the ventriloquists in Nature, can add little. Give the Archquack his due. These arrogancies of his prove only that he is mounted on his high horse, and has now the world under him.

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[1] *Cagliostro démasqué à Varsovie, en* 1780, pp. 35 et seq. (Paris, 1786.)

Such reverses, which will occur in the lot of every man, are, for our Cagliostro, but as specks in the blaze of the meridian Sun. With undimmed lustre he is, as heretofore, handed over from this "Prince P." to that Prince Q.; among which high believing potentates, what is an incredulous "Count M."? His pockets are distended with ducats and diamonds: he is off to Vienna, to Frankfort, to Strasburg, by extra-post; and there also will work miracles. "The train he commonly took with him," says the Inquisition-Biographer, "corresponded to the rest; he always travelled post, with a considerable suite: couriers, lackeys, body-servants, domestics of all sorts, sumptuously dressed, gave an air of reality to the high birth he vaunted. The very liveries he got made at Paris cost twenty *louis* each. Apartments furnished in the height of the mode; a magnificent table, open to numerous guests; rich dresses for himself and his wife, corresponded to this luxurious way of life. His feigned generosity likewise made a great noise. Often he gratuitously doctored the poor, and even gave them alms."[1]

In the inside of all this splendid travelling and lodging economy are to be seen, as we know, two suspicious-looking rouged or unrouged figures, of a Count and a Countess; lolling on their cushions there, with a jaded, haggard kind of aspect; they eye one another sullenly, in silence, with a scarce-suppressed indignation; for each thinks the other does not work enough and eats too much. Whether Dame Lorenza followed her peculiar side of the business with reluctance or with free alacrity, is a moot-point among Biographers: not so that, with her choleric adipose Archquack, she had a sour life of it, and brawling abounded. If we look still farther inwards, and try to penetrate the inmost self-consciousness, what in another man would be called the conscience, of the Archquack himself, the view gets most uncertain; little or nothing to be seen but a thick fallacious haze. Which indeed *was* the main thing extant there. Much in the Count Front-d'airain remains dubious; yet hardly this: his want of clear insight into anything, most of all into his own inner man. Cunning in the supreme degree he has; intellect next to none. Nay, is not cunning (couple it with an esurient character) the natural consequence of *defective* intellect? It is properly the vehement exercise of a short, poor vision; of an intellect sunk, bemired; which can attain to no free vision, otherwise it would lead the esurient man to be honest.

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[1] *Vie de Joseph Balsamo,* p. 41.

Meanwhile gleams of muddy light will occasionally visit all mortals; every living creature (according to Milton, the very Devil) has some more or less faint resemblance of a Conscience; must make inwardly certain auricular confessions, absolutions, professions of faith, — were it only that he does not yet quite loathe, and so proceed to hang himself. What such a Porcus as Cagliostro might specially feel, and think, and *be*, were difficult in any case to say; much more when contradiction and mystification, designed and unavoidable, so involve the matter. One of the most authentic documents preserved of him is the Picture of his Visage. An Effigies once universally diffused; in oil-paint, aquatint, marble, stucco, and perhaps gingerbread, decorating millions of apartments: of which remarkable Effigies one copy, engraved in the line-manner, happily still lies here. Fittest of visages; worthy to be worn by the Quack of Quacks! A most portentous face of scoundrelism: a fat, snub, abominable face; dew-lapped, flat-nosed, greasy, full of greediness, sensuality, oxlike obstinacy; a forehead impudent, refusing to be ashamed; and then two eyes turned up seraphically languishing, as in divine contemplation and adoration; a touch of quiz too: on the whole, perhaps the most perfect quack-face produced by the eighteenth century. There he sits, and seraphically languishes, with this epigraph: —

> *"De l'Ami des Humains reconnaissez les traits :*
> *Tous ses jours sont marqués par de nouveaux bienfaits,*
> *Il prolonge la vie, il secourt l'indigence ;*
> *Le plaisir d'être utile est seul sa récompense."*

A probable conjecture were, that this same Theosophy, Theophilanthropy, Solacement of the Poor, to which our Archquack now more and more betook himself, might serve not only as bird-lime for external game, but also half-unconsciously as salve for assuaging his own spiritual sores. Am not I a charitable man? could the Archquack say: if I have erred myself, have I not, by theosophic unctuous discourses, removed much cause of error? The lying, the quackery, what are these but the method of accommodating yourself to the temper of men; of getting their ear, their dull long ear, which Honesty had no chance to catch? Nay, at worst, is not this an unjust world; full of nothing but beasts of prey, four-footed or two-footed? Nature has commanded, saying: Man, help thyself. Ought not the man of my genius, since he was not born a Prince, since in these scandalous times he has not been elected a Prince, to make himself one? If not by open violence, for which he wants military force, then surely by superior science, — exercised in a private way. Heal the diseases of the Poor, the far deeper diseases of the Ignorant; in a word, found Egyptian Lodges, and get the means of founding them. — By such soliloquies can Count Front-of-brass Pinchbeckostom, in rare atrabiliar hours of self-questioning, compose himself. For the rest, such hours are rare: the Count is a man of action and digestion, not of self-questioning; usually the day brings its abundant task; there is no time for abstractions, — of the metaphysical sort.

Be this as it may, the Count has arrived at Strasburg; is working higher wonders than ever. At Strasburg, indeed, in the year 1783, occurs his apotheosis; what we can call the culmination and Fourth Act of his Life-drama. He was here for a number of months; in full blossom and radiance, the envy and admiration of the world. In large hired hospitals, he with open drug-box containing "Extract of Saturn," and even with open purse, relieves the suffering poor; unfolds himself lamb-like, angelic to a believing few, of the rich classes; turns a silent minatory lion-face to unbelievers, were they of the richest. Medical miracles have in all times been common: but what miracle is this of an Oriental or Occidental

Serene-Excellence, who, "regardless of expense," employs himself not in preserving game, but in curing sickness, in illuminating ignorance? Behold how he dives, at noonday, into the infectious hovels of the mean; and on the equipages, haughtinesses, and even dinner-invitations of the great, turns only his negatory front-of-brass! The Prince Cardinal de Rohan, Archbishop of Strasburg, first-class Peer of France, of the Blood-royal of Brittany, intimates a wish to see him; he answers: "If Monseigneur the Cardinal is sick, let him come and I will cure him; if he is well, he has no need of me, I none of him."[1]

Heaven meanwhile has sent him a few disciples: by a nice tact, he knows his man; to one speaks only of Spagiric Medicine, Downfall of Tyranny, and the Egyptian Lodge; to another, of quite high matters, beyond this diurnal sphere, of visits from the Angel of Light, visits from him of Darkness; passing a Statue of Christ, he will pause with a wondrously accented plaintive "Ha!" as of recognition, as of thousand-years remembrance; and when questioned, sink into mysterious silence. *Is* he the Wandering Jew, then? Heaven knows! At Strasburg, in a word, Fortune not only smiles but laughs upon him: as crowning favor, he finds here the richest, inflammablest, most open-handed Dupe ever yet vouchsafed him; no other than that same many-titled Louis de Rohan; strong in whose favor, he can laugh again at Fortune.

Let the curious reader look at him, for an instant or two, through the eyes of two eye-witnesses: the Abbé Georgel, Prince Louis's diplomatic Factotum, and Herr Meiners, the Göttingen Professor: —

"Admitted at length," says our too prosing Jesuit Abbé, "to the sanctuary of this Æsculapius, Prince Louis saw, according to his own account, in the incommunicative man's physiognomy, something so dignified, so imposing, that he felt penetrated with a religious awe, and reverence dictated his address. Their interview, which was brief, excited more keenly than ever his desire of farther acquaintance. He attained it at length: and the crafty empiric graduated so cunningly his words and procedure, that he gained, without appearing to court it, the Cardinal's entire confidence, and the greatest ascendency over his will. 'Your soul,' said he one day to the Prince, 'is worthy of mine; you deserve to be made participator of all my secrets.' Such an avowal captivated the whole faculties, intellectual and moral, of a man who at all times had hunted after secrets of alchemy and botany. From this moment their union became intimate and public: Cagliostro went and established himself at Saverne, while his Eminency was residing there; their solitary interviews were long and frequent. . . . I remember once, having learnt, by a sure way, that Baron de Planta (his Eminency's man of affairs) had frequent, most expensive orgies, in the Archiepiscopal Palace, where Tokay wine ran like water, to regale Cagliostro and his pretended wife, I thought it my duty to inform the Cardinal: his answer was, 'I know it; I have even authorized him to commit abuses, if he judge fit.' . . . He came at last to have no other will than Cagliostro's: and to such a length had it gone, that this sham Egyptian, finding it good to quit Strasburg for a time, and retire into Switzerland, the Cardinal, apprised thereof, despatched his Secretary as well to attend him, as to obtain Predictions from him; such were transmitted in cipher to the Cardinal on every point he needed to consult of."[1]

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[1] *Mémoires de l'Abbé Georgel*, ii. 48.

"Before ever I arrived in Strasburg [hear now the as prosing Protestant Professor], I knew almost to a certainty that I should not see Count Cagliostro; at least, not get to speak with him. From many persons I had heard that he, on no account, received visits from curious Travellers, in a state of health; that such as, without being sick, appeared in his audiences were sure to be treated by him, in the brutalest way, as spies. . . . Nevertheless, though I saw not this new god of Physic near at hand and deliberately, but only for a moment as he rolled on in a rapid carriage, I fancy myself to be better acquainted with him than many that have lived in his society for months." "My unavoidable conviction is, that Count Cagliostro, from of old, has been more of a cheat than an enthusiast; and also that he continues a cheat to this day.

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[1] Georgel, *ubi suprà.*

"As to his country I have ascertained nothing. Some make him a Spaniard, others a Jew, or an Italian, or a Ragusan; or even an Arab, who had persuaded some Asiatic Prince to send his son to travel in Europe, and then murdered the youth, and taken possession of his treasures. As the self-styled Count speaks badly all the languages you hear from him, and has most likely spent the greater part of his life under feigned names far from home, it is probable enough no sure trace of his origin may ever be discovered."

"On his first appearance in Strasburg he connected himself with the Freemasons; but only till he felt strong enough to stand on his own feet: he soon gained the favor of the Prætor and the Cardinal; and through these the favor of the Court, to such a degree that his adversaries cannot so much as think of overthrowing him. With the Prætor and Cardinal he is said to demean himself as with persons who were under boundless obligation to him, to whom he was under none: the equipage of the Cardinal he seems to use as freely as his own. He pretends that he can recognize Atheists or Blasphemers by the smell; that the vapor from such throws him into epileptic fits; into which sacred disorder he, like a true juggler, has the art of falling when he likes. In public he no longer vaunts of rule over spirits, or other magical arts; but I know, even as certainly, that he still pretends to evoke spirits, and by their help and apparition to heal diseases, as I know this other fact, that he understands no more of the human system, or the nature of its diseases, or the use of the commonest therapeutic methods, than any other quack."

"According to the crediblest accounts of persons who have long observed him, he is a man to an inconceivable degree choleric (*heftig*), heedless, inconstant; and therefore doubtless it was the happiest idea he ever in his whole life came upon, this of making himself inaccessible; of raising the most obstinate reserve as a bulwark round him; without which precaution he must long ago have been caught at fault.

"For his own labor he takes neither payment nor present:

when presents are made him of such a sort as cannot without offence be refused, he forthwith returns some counter-present, of equal or still higher value. Nay he not only takes nothing from his patients, but frequently admits them, months long, to his house and his table, and will not consent to the smallest recompense. With all this disinterestedness (conspicuous enough, as you may suppose), he lives in an expensive way, plays deep, loses almost constantly to ladies; so that, according to the very lowest estimate, he must require at least 20,000 livres a year. The darkness which Cagliostro has, on purpose, spread over the sources of his income and outlay, contributes even more than his munificence and miraculous cures to the notion that he is a divine extraordinary man, who has watched Nature in her deepest operations, and among other secrets stolen that of Gold-making from her. . . . With a mixture of sorrow and indignation over our age, I have to record that this man has found acceptance, not only among the great, who from of old have been the easiest bewitched by such, but also with many of the learned, and even physicians and naturalists."[1]

Halcyon days; only too good to continue! All glory runs its course; has its culmination, and then its often precipitous decline. Eminency Rohan, with fervid temper and small instruction, perhaps of dissolute, certainly of dishonest manners, in whom the faculty of Wonder had attained such prodigious development, was indeed the very stranded whale for jackals to feed on: unhappily, however, no one jackal could long be left in solitary possession of him. A sharper-toothed she-jackal now strikes in; bites infinitely deeper; stranded whale and he-jackal both are like to become her prey. A young French Mantua-maker, "Countess de La Motte-Valois, descended from Henri II. by the bastard line," without Extract of Saturn, Egyptian Masonry, or any *verbal* conference with Dark Angels, — has genius enough to get her finger in the Archquack's rich Hermetic Projection, appropriate the golden proceeds, and even finally break the crucible. Prince Cardinal Louis de Rohan is off to Paris, under her guidance, to see the long-invisible Queen, or Queen's *Apparition;* to pick up the Rose in the Garden of Trianon, dropt by her fair sham-royal hand; and then — descend rapidly to the Devil, and drag Cagliostro along with him.

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[1] Meiners: *Briefe über die Schweiz* (as quoted in *Mirabeau*)

The intelligent reader observes, we have now arrived at that stupendous business of the *Diamond Necklace:* into the dark complexities of which we need not here do more than glance: who knows but, next month, our Historical Chapter, written specially on this subject, may itself see the light? Enough, for the present, if we fancy vividly the poor whale Cardinal, so deep in the adventure that Grand-Cophtic "predictions transmitted in cipher" will no longer illuminate him; but the Grand Cophta must leave all masonic or other business, happily begun in Naples, Bordeaux, Lyons, and come personally to Paris with predictions at first hand. "The new Calchas," says poor Abbé Georgel, "must have read the entrails of his victim ill; for, on issuing from these communications with the Angel of Light and of Darkness, he prophesied to the Cardinal that this happy correspondence," with the Queen's Similitude, "would place him at the highest point of favor; that his influence in the Government would soon become paramount; that he would use it for the propagation of good principles, the glory of the Supreme Being, and the happiness of Frenchmen." The new Calchas was indeed at fault: but how could he be otherwise? Let these high Queen's-favors, and all terrestrial shiftings of the wind, turn as they will, *his* reign, he can well see, is appointed to be temporary; in the mean while, Tokay flows like water; prophecies of good, not of evil, are the method to keep it flowing. Thus if, for Circe de La Motte-Valois, the Egyptian Masonry is but a foolish enchanted cup wherewith to turn her fat Cardinal into a quadruped, she herself converse-wise, for the Grand Cophta, is one who must ever fodder said quadruped with Court hopes, and stall-feed him fatter and fatter, — it is expected, for the knife of *both* parties. They are mutually useful; live in peace, and Tokay festivity, though mutually suspicious, mutually contemptuous. So stand matters through the spring and summer months of the year 1785.

But fancy next that, — while Tokay is flowing within doors, and abroad Egyptian Lodges are getting founded, and gold and glory, from Paris as from other cities, supernaturally coming in, — the latter end of August has arrived, and with it Commissary Chesnon, to lodge the whole unholy Brotherhood, from Cardinal down to Sham-queen, in separate cells of the Bastille! There, for nine long months, let them howl and wail, in bass or in treble; and emit the falsest of false *Mémoires;* among which that *Mémoire pour le Comte de Cagliostro, en présence des autres Co-Accusés,* with its Trebisond Acharats, Scherifs of Mecca, and Nature's unfortunate Child, all gravely printed with French types in the year 1786, may well bear the palm. Fancy that Necklace or Diamonds will nowhere unearth themselves; that the Tuileries Palace sits struck with astonishment and speechless chagrin; that Paris, that all Europe, is ringing with the wonder. That Count Front-of-brass Pinchbeckostom, confronted, at the judgment-bar, with a shrill glib Circe de La Motte, has need of all his eloquence; that nevertheless the Front-of-brass prevails, and exasperated Circe "throws a candlestick at him." Finally, that on the 31st of May, 1786, the assembled Parliament of Paris, "at nine in the evening, after a sitting of eighteen hours," has solemnly pronounced judgment: and now that Cardinal Louis is gone "to his estates;" Countess de La Motte is shaven on the head, branded, with red-hot iron "V" (*Voleuse*) on both shoulders, and confined for life to the Salpêtrière; her Count wandering uncertain, with diamonds for sale, over the British Empire; that the Sieur de Villette, for handling a queen's pen, is banished forever; the too queenlike Demoiselle Gay d'Oliva (with her unfathered infant) "put out of Court;" — and Grand Cophta Cagliostro liberated indeed, but pillaged, and ordered forthwith to take himself away. His disciples illuminate their windows; but what does that avail? Commissary Chesnon, Bastille-Governor De Launay cannot recollect the least particular of those priceless effects, those gold-rouleaus, repeating watches of his: he must even retire to Passy that very night; and two days afterwards, sees nothing for it but Boulogne and England. Thus does the miserable pickleherring tragedy of the Diamond Necklace wind itself up, and wind Cagliostro once more to inhospitable shores.

Arrived here, and lodged tolerably in "Sloane Street, Knightsbridge," by the aid of a certain Mr. Swinton, whilom broken Wine-merchant, now Apothecary, to whom he carries introductions, he can drive a small trade in Egyptian pills, such as one "sells *in Paris* at thirty shillings the dram;" in unctuously discoursing to Egyptian Lodges; in "giving public audiences as at Strasburg," — if so be any one will bite. At all events, he can, by the aid of amanuensis-disciples, compose and publish his *Lettre au Peuple Anglais;* setting forth his unheard-of generosities, unheard-of injustices suffered, in a world not worthy of him, at the hands of English Lawyers, Bastille-Governors, French Counts, and others; his *Lettre aux Français,* singing to the same tune, predicting too, what many inspired Editors had already boded, that "the Bastille would be destroyed," and "a King would come who should govern by States-General." But, alas, the shafts of Criticism are busy with him; so many hostile eyes look towards him: the world, in short, is getting too hot for him. Mark, nevertheless, how the brow of brass quails not; nay a touch of his old poetic Humor, even in this sad crisis, unexpectedly unfolds itself.

One De Morande, Editor of a *Courrier de l'Europe* published here at that period, has for some time made it his distinction to be the foremost of Cagliostro's enemies. Cagliostro, enduring much in silence, happens once, in some "public audience," to mention a practice he had witnessed in Arabia the Stony: the people there, it seems, are in the habit of fattening a few pigs annually, on provender mixed with arsenic, whereby the whole pig-carcass by and by becomes, so to speak, arsenical; the arsenical pigs are then let loose into the woods; eaten by lions, leopards and other ferocious creatures; which latter naturally all die in consequence, and so the woods are cleared of them. This adroit practice the Sieur Morande thought a proper subject for banter; and accordingly, in his Seventeenth and two following Numbers, made merry enough with it.

Whereupon Count Front-of-brass, whose patience has limits, writes as Advertisement (still to be read in old files of the *Public Advertiser*, under date September 3, 1786), a French Letter, not without causticity and aristocratic disdain; challenging the witty Sieur to breakfast with him, for the 9th of November next, in the face of the world, on an actual Sucking Pig, fattened by Cagliostro, but cooked, carved and selected from by the Sieur Morande, — under bet of Five Thousand Guineas sterling that, next morning thereafter, he the Sieur Morande shall be dead, and Count Cagliostro be alive! The poor Sieur durst not cry, Done; and backed out of the transaction, making wry faces. Thus does a kind of red coppery splendor encircle our Archquack's decline; thus with brow of brass, grim smiling, does he meet his destiny.

But suppose we should now, from these foreign scenes turn homewards, for a moment, into the native alley in Palermo! Palermo, with its dinginess, its mud or dust, the old black Balsamo House, the very beds and chairs, all are still standing there; and Beppo has altered so strangely, has wandered so far away. Let us look; for happily we have the fairest opportunity.

In April, 1787, Palermo contained a Traveller of a thousand; no other than the great Goethe from Weimar. At his Table-d'hôte he heard much of Cagliostro; at length also of a certain Palermo Lawyer, who had been engaged by the French Government to draw up an authentic genealogy and memoir of him. This Lawyer, and even the rude draft of his Memoir, he with little difficulty gets to see; inquires next whether it were not possible to see the actual Balsamo Family, whereof it appears the mother and a widowed sister still survive. For this matter, however, the Lawyer can do nothing; only refer him to his Clerk; who again starts difficulties: To get at those genealogic Documents he has been obliged to invent some story of a Government-Pension being in the wind for those poor Balsamos; and now that the whole matter is finished, and the Paper sent off to France, has nothing so much at heart as to keep out of their way: —

"So said the Clerk. However, as I could not abandon my purpose, we after some study concerted that I should give myself out for an Englishman, and bring the family news of Cagliostro, who had lately got out of the Bastille, and gone to London.

"At the appointed hour, it might be three in the afternoon, we set forth. The house lay in the corner of an Alley, not far from the main-street named *Il Casaro.* We ascended a miserable staircase, and came straight into the kitchen. A woman of middle stature, broad and stout, yet not corpulent, stood busy washing the kitchen-dishes. She was decently dressed; and, on our entrance, turned up the one end of her apron, to hide the soiled side from us. She joyfully recognized my conductor, and said: 'Signor Giovanni, do you bring us good news? Have you made out anything?'

"He answered: 'In our affair, nothing yet; but here is a Stranger that brings a salutation from your Brother, and can tell you how he is at present.'

"The salutation I was to bring stood not in our agreement: meanwhile, one way or other, the introduction was accomplished. 'You know my Brother?' inquired she. — 'All Europe knows him,' answered I; 'and I fancied it would gratify you to hear that he is now in safety and well; as, of late, no doubt you have been anxious about him.' — 'Step in,' said she; 'I will follow you directly;' and with the Clerk I entered the room.

"It was large and high; and might, with us, have passed for a saloon; it seemed, indeed, to be almost the sole lodging of the family. A single window lighted the large walls, which had once had color; and on which were black pictures of saints, in gilt frames, hanging round. Two large beds, without curtains, stood at one wall; a brown press, in the form of a writing-desk, at the other. Old rush-bottomed chairs, the backs of which had once been gilt, stood by; and the tiles of the floor were in many places worn deep into hollows. For the rest, all was cleanly; and we approached the family, which sat assembled at the one window, in the other end of the apartment.

"Whilst my guide was explaining, to the old Widow Balsamo, the purpose of our visit, and by reason of her deafness had to repeat his words several times aloud, I had time to observe the chamber and the other persons in it. A girl of about sixteen, well formed, whose features had become uncertain by small-pox, stood at the window; beside her a young man, whose disagreeable look, deformed by the same disease, also struck me. In an easy-chair, right before the window, sat or rather lay a sick, much disshapen person, who appeared to labor under a sort of lethargy.

"My guide having made himself understood, we were invited to take seats. The old woman put some questions to me; which, however, I had to get interpreted before I could answer them, the Sicilian dialect not being quite at my command.

"Meanwhile I looked at the aged widow with satisfaction. She was of middle stature, but well shaped; over her regular features, which age had not deformed, lay that sort of peace usual with people that have lost their hearing; the tone of her voice was soft and agreeable.

"I answered her questions; and my answers also had again to be interpreted for her.

"The slowness of our conversation gave me leisure to measure my words. I told her that her son had been acquitted in France, and was at present in England, where he met with good reception. Her joy, which she testified at these tidings, was mixed with expressions of a heartfelt piety; and as she now spoke a little louder and slower, I could the better understand her.

"In the mean time, the daughter had entered; and taken her seat beside my conductor, who repeated to her faithfully what I had been narrating. She had put on a clean apron; had set her hair in order under the net-cap. The more I looked at her, and compared her with her mother, the more striking became the difference of the two figures. A vivacious, healthy Sensualism (*Sinnlichkeit*) beamed forth from the whole structure of the daughter: she might be a woman of about forty. With brisk blue eyes, she looked sharply round; yet in her look I could trace no suspicion. When she sat, her figure promised more height than it showed when she rose: her posture was determinate, she sat with her body leaned forwards, the hands resting on the knees. For the rest, her physiognomy, more of the snubby than the sharp sort, reminded me of her Brother's Portrait, familiar to us in engravings. She asked me several things about my journey, my purpose to see Sicily; and was sure I would come back, and celebrate the Feast of Saint Rosalia with them.

"As the grandmother, meanwhile, had again put some questions to me, and I was busy answering her, the daughter kept speaking to my companion half aloud, yet so that I could take occasion to ask what it was. He answered: Signora Capitummino was telling him that her brother owed her fourteen gold Ounces; on his sudden departure from Palermo, she had redeemed several things for him that were in pawn; but never since that day had either heard from him, or got money or any other help, though it was said he had great riches, and made a princely outlay. Now would not I perhaps undertake on my return, to remind him, in a handsome way, of the debt, and procure some assistance for her; nay would I not carry a Letter with me, or at all events get it carried? I offered to do so. She asked where I lodged, whither she must send the Letter to me? I avoided naming my abode, and offered to call next day towards night, and receive the Letter myself.

"She thereupon described to me her untoward situation: how she was a widow with three children, of whom the one girl was getting educated in a convent, the other was here present, and her son just gone out to his lesson. How, beside these three children, she had her mother to maintain; and moreover out of Christian love had taken the unhappy sick person there to her house, whereby the burden was heavier: how all her industry would scarcely suffice to get necessaries for herself and hers. She knew indeed that God did not leave good works unrewarded; yet must sigh very sore under the load she had long borne.

"The young people mixed in the dialogue, and our conversation grew livelier. While speaking with the others, I could hear the good old widow ask her daughter: If I belonged, then, to their holy Religion? I remarked also that the daughter strove, in a prudent way, to avoid an answer; signifying to her mother, so far as I could take it up: That the Stranger seemed to have a kind feeling towards them; and that it was not well-bred to question any one straightway on that point.

"As they heard that I was soon to leave Palermo, they became more pressing, and importuned me to come back; especially vaunting the paradisaic days of the Rosalia Festival, the like of which was not to be seen and tasted in all the world.

"My attendant, who had long been anxious to get off, at last put an end to the interview by his gestures; and I promised to return on the morrow evening, and take the Letter. My attendant expressed his joy that all had gone off so well, and we parted mutually content.

"You may fancy the impression this poor and pious, well-dispositioned family had made on me. My curiosity was satisfied; but their natural and worthy bearing had raised an interest in me, which reflection did but increase.

"Forthwith, however, there arose for me anxieties about the following day. It was natural that this appearance of mine, which, at the first moment, had taken them by surprise, should, after my departure, awaken many reflections. By the Genealogy I knew that several others of the family were in life: it was natural that they should call their friends together, and in the presence of all, get those things repeated which, the day before, they had heard from me with admiration. My object was attained; there remained nothing more than, in some good fashion, to end the adventure. I accordingly repaired next day, directly after dinner, alone to their house. They expressed surprise as I entered. The Letter was not ready yet, they said; and some of their relations wished to make my acquaintance, who towards night would be there.

"I answered, that having to set off to-morrow morning, and visits still to pay, and packing to transact, I had thought it better to come early than not at all.

"Meanwhile the son entered, whom yesterday I had not seen. He resembled his sister in size and figure. He brought the Letter they were to give me; he had, as is common in those parts, got it written out of doors, by one of their Notaries that sit publicly to do such things. The young man had a still, melancholy and modest aspect; inquired after his Uncle, asked about his riches and outlays, and added sorrowfully, Why had he so forgotten his kindred? 'It were our greatest fortune,' continued he, 'should he once return hither, and take notice of us: but,' continued he, 'how came he to let you know that he had relatives in Palermo? It is said, he everywhere denies us, and gives himself out for a man of great birth.' I answered this question, which had now arisen by the imprudence of my Guide at our first entrance, in such sort as to make it seem that the Uncle, though he might have reasons for concealing his birth from the public, did yet, towards his friends and acquaintance, keep it no secret.

"The sister, who had come up during this dialogue, and by the presence of her brother, perhaps also by the absence of her yesterday's friend, had got more courage, began also to speak with much grace and liveliness. They begged me earnestly to recommend them to their Uncle, if I wrote to him; and not less earnestly, when once I should have made this journey through the Island, to come back and pass the Rosalia Festival with them.

"The mother spoke in accordance with her children. 'Sir,' said she, 'though it is not seemly, as I have a grown daughter, to see stranger gentlemen in my house, and one has cause to guard against both danger and evil-speaking, yet shall you ever be welcome to us, when you return to this city.'

"'Oh yes,' answered the young ones, 'we will lead the Gentleman all round the Festival; we will show him everything, get a place on the scaffolds, where the grand sights are seen best. What will he say to the great Chariot, and more than all, to the glorious Illumination!'

"Meanwhile the Grandmother had read the Letter and again read it. Hearing that I was about to take leave, she arose, and gave me the folded sheet. 'Tell my son,' began she with a noble vivacity, nay with a sort of inspiration, 'Tell my son how happy the news have made me, which you brought from him! Tell him that I clasp him to my heart'—here she stretched out her arms asunder, and pressed them again together on her breast—'that I daily beseech God and our Holy Virgin for him in prayer; that I give him and his wife my blessing; and that I wish before my end to see him again with these eyes, which have shed so many tears for him.'

"The peculiar grace of the Italian tongue favored the choice and noble arrangement of these words, which moreover were accompanied with lively gestures, wherewith that nation can add such a charm to spoken words.

"I took my leave, not without emotion. They all gave me their hands; the children showed me out; and as I went down stairs, they jumped to the balcony of the kitchen-window, which projected over the street; called after me, threw me salutes, and repeated, that I must in no wise forget to come back. I saw them still on the balcony, when I turned the corner."[1]

Poor old Felicità, and must thy pious prayers, thy motherly blessings, and so many tears shed by those old eyes, be all in vain! To thyself, in any case, they were blessed. — As for the Signora Capitummino, with her three fatherless children, shall we not hope at least, that the fourteen gold Ounces were paid, by a sure hand, and so her heavy burden, for some space, lightened a little? Alas, no, it would seem; owing to accidents, not even that![2]

Count Cagliostro, all this while, is rapidly proceeding with his Fifth Act; the red coppery splendor darkens more and more into final gloom. Some boiling muddleheads of a dupable sort there still are in England: Popish-Riot Lord George, for instance, will walk with him to Count Barthélemy's or D'Adhémar's; and, in bad French and worse rhetoric, abuse the Queen of France: but what does it profit? Lord George must one day (after noise enough) revisit Newgate for it; and in the mean while, hard words pay no scores. Apothecary Swinton begins to get wearisome; French spies look ominously in; Egyptian Pills are slack of sale; the old vulturous Attorney-host anew scents carrion, is bestirring itself anew: Count Cagliostro, in the May of 1787, must once more leave

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[1] Goethe's *Werke* (*Italiänische Reise*), xxviii. 146.
[2] Ibid.

England. But whither? Ah, whither! At Bâle, at Bienne, over Switzerland, the game is up. At Aix in Savoy, there are baths, but no gudgeons in them: at Turin, his Majesty of Sardinia meets you with an order to begone on the instant. A like fate from the Emperor Joseph at Roveredo; — before the *Liber memorialis de Caleostro dum esset Roboretti* could extend to many pages! Count Front-of-brass begins confessing himself to priests: yet "at Trent paints a new hieroglyphic Screen," — touching last flicker of a light that once burnt so high! He pawns diamond buckles; wanders necessitous hither and thither; repents, unrepents; knows not what to do. For Destiny has her nets round him; they are straitening, straitening; too soon he will be *ginned!*

Driven out from Trent, what shall he make of the new hieroglyphic Screen, what of himself? The wayworn Grand-Cophtess has begun to blab family secrets; she longs to be in Rome, by her mother's hearth, by her mother's grave; in any nook, where so much as the shadow of refuge waits her. To the desperate Count Front-of-brass all places are nearly alike: urged by female babble, he will go to Rome, then; why not? On a May-day, of the year 1789 (when such glorious work had just begun in France, to him all forbidden!), he enters the Eternal City; it was his doom-summons that called him thither. On the 29th of next December, the Holy Inquisition, long watchful enough, detects him founding some feeble moneyless ghost of an Egyptian Lodge; "picks him off," as the military say, and locks him hard and fast in the Castle of St. Angelo: —

"*Lasciate ogni speranza, voi che 'ntrate!*"

Count Cagliostro did not lose all hope: nevertheless a few words will now suffice for him. In vain, with his mouth of pinchbeck and his front of brass, does he heap chimera on chimera; demand religious Books (which are freely given him); demand clean Linen, and an interview with his Wife (which are refused him); assert now that the Egyptian Masonry is a divine system, accommodated to erring and gullible men, which the Holy Father, when he knows it, will patronize; anon that there are some four millions of Freemasons, spread over Europe, all sworn to exterminate Priest and King, wherever met with: in vain! they will not acquit him, as misunderstood Theophilanthropist; will not emit him, in Pope's pay, as renegade Masonic Spy: "he can't get out." Donna Lorenza languishes, invisible to him, in a neighboring cell; begins at length to *confess!* Whereupon he too, in torrents, will emit confessions and forestall her: these the Inquisition pocket and sift (whence this *Life of Balsamo*); but will not let him out. In fine, after some eighteen months of the weariest hounding, doubling, worrying, and standing at bay, His Holiness gives sentence: The Manuscript of Egyptian Masonry is to be burnt by hand of the common Hangman, and all that intermeddle with such Masonry are accursed; Giuseppe Balsamo, justly forfeited of life for being a Freemason, shall nevertheless in mercy be forgiven; instructed in the duties of penitence, and even kept safe thenceforth and till death, — in ward of Holy Church. Ill-starred Acharat, must it so end with thee? This was in April, 1791.

He addressed (how vainly!) an appeal to the French Constituent Assembly. As was said, in Heaven, in Earth, or in Hell there was no Assembly that could well take his part. For four years more, spent one knows not how, — most probably in the furor of edacity, with insufficient cookery, and the stupor of indigestion, — the curtain lazily falls. There rotted and gave way the cordage of a tough heart. One summer morning of the year 1795, the Body of Cagliostro is still found in the prison of St. Leo; but Cagliostro's Self has escaped, — *whither* no man yet knows. The brow of brass, behold how it has got all unlacquered; these pinchbeck lips can lie no more: Cagliostro's work is ended, and now only his *account* to present. As the Scherif of Mecca said, "Nature's unfortunate child, adieu!"

Such, according to our comprehension thereof, is the rise, progress, grandeur and decadence of the Quack of Quacks. Does the reader ask, What good was in it; Why occupy his time and hours with the biography of such a miscreant? We answer, It was stated on the very threshold of this matter, in the loftiest terms, by Herr Sauerteig, that the Lives of all Eminent Persons, miscreant or creant, ought to be written. Thus has not the very Devil his *Life*, deservedly written not by Daniel Defoe only, but by quite other hands than Daniel's? For the rest, the Thing represented on these pages is no Sham, but a Reality; thou hast it, O reader, as we have it: Nature was pleased to produce even such a man, even so, not otherwise; and the Editor of this Magazine is here mainly to record, in an adequate manner, what *she*, of her thousand-fold mysterious richness and greatness, produces.

But the moral lesson? Where is the moral lesson? Foolish reader, in every Reality, nay in every genuine Shadow of a Reality (what we call Poem), there lie a hundred such, or a million such, according as thou hast the *eye* to read them! Of which hundred or million lying *here* in the present Reality, couldst not thou, for example, be advised to take this one, to thee worth all the rest: "Behold, I too have attained that immeasurable, mysterious glory of being *alive;* to me also a Capability has been intrusted; shall I strive to work it out, manlike, into Faithfulness, and Doing; or, quacklike, into Eatableness, and Similitude of Doing? Or why not rather, gigman-like, and following the 'respectable' countless multitude, — into *both?*" The decision is of quite *infinite* moment; see thou make it aright.

But in fine, look at this matter of Cagliostro, as at all matters, with thy heart, with thy whole mind; no longer merely squint at it with the poor side-glance of thy calculative faculty. Look at it not *logically* only, but *mystically.* Thou shalt in sober truth see it (as Sauerteig asserted) to be a Pasquillant verse, of most inspired writing in its kind, in that same "Grand Bible of Universal History;" wondrously and even indispensably connected with the Heroic portions that stand there; even as the all-showing Light is with the Darkness wherein nothing can be seen; as the hideous taloned *roots* are with the fair *boughs*, and their leaves and flowers and fruit; both of which, and not one of which, make the Tree. Think also whether thou hast known no Public Quacks, on far higher scale than this, whom a Castle of St. Angelo never could get hold of: and how, as Emperors, Chancellors (having found much fitter machinery), they could run their Quack-career; and make whole kingdoms, whole continents, into one huge Egyptian Lodge, and squeeze supplies of money or of blood from it at discretion? Also, whether thou even now knowest not Private Quacks, innumerable as the sea-sands, toiling as mere *Half*-Cagliostros; imperfect, hybrid-quacks, of whom Cagliostro is as the unattainable ideal and type-specimen? Such is the world. Understand it, despise it, love it; cheerfully hold on thy way through it, with thy eye on higher loadstars!

DEATH OF EDWARD IRVING.[1]

[1835.]

Edward Irving's warfare has closed; if not in victory, yet in invincibility, and faithful endurance to the end. The Spirit of the Time, which could not enlist him as its soldier, must needs, in all ways, fight against him as its enemy: it has done its part, and he has done his. One of the noblest natures; a man of antique heroic nature, in questionable modern garniture, which he could not wear! Around him a distracted society, vacant, prurient; heat and darkness, and what these two may breed: mad extremes of flattery, followed by madder contumely, by indifference and neglect! These were the conflicting elements; this is the result they have made out among them. The voice of our "son of thunder," — with its deep tone of wisdom that belonged to all articulate-speaking ages, never inaudible amid wildest dissonances that belong to this inarticulate age, which slumbers and somnambulates, which cannot *speak*, but only screech and gibber, — has gone silent so soon. Closed are those lips. The large heart, with its large bounty, where wretchedness found solacement, and they that were wandering in darkness the light as of a home, has paused. The strong man can no more: beaten on from without, undermined from within, he has had to sink overwearied, as at nightfall, when it was yet but the mid-season of day. Irving was forty-two years and some months old: Scotland sent him forth a Herculean man; our mad Babylon wore him and wasted him, with all her engines; and it took her twelve years. He sleeps with his fathers, in that loved birth-land: Babylon with its deafening inanity rages on: but to him henceforth innocuous, unheeded — forever.

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[1] Fraser's Magazine, No. 61.

Reader, thou hast seen and heard the man, as who has not, — with wise or unwise wonder; thou shalt not see or hear him again. The work, be what it might, is *done;* dark curtains sink over it, enclose it ever deeper into the unchangeable Past. Think, for perhaps thou art one of a thousand, and worthy so to think, That here once more was a genuine man sent into this our *un*genuine phantasmagory of a world, which would go to ruin without such; that here once more, under thy own eyes, in this last decade, was enacted the old Tragedy, and has had its fifth act now, of *The Messenger of Truth in the Age of Shams,* — and what relation thou thyself mayest have to that. Whether any? Beyond question, thou thyself art *here;* either a dreamer or awake; and one day shalt cease to dream.

This man was appointed a Christian Priest; and strove with the whole force that was in him to *be* it. To be it: in a time of Tithe Controversy, Encyclopedism, Catholic Rent, Philanthropism, and the Revolution of Three Days! He might have been so many things; not a speaker only, but a doer; the leader of hosts of men. For his head, when the Fog-Babylon had not yet obscured it, was of strong far-searching insight; his very enthusiasm was sanguine, not atrabiliar; he was so loving, full of hope, so simple-hearted, and made all that approached him his. A giant force of activity was in the man; speculation was accident, not nature. Chivalry, adventurous field-life of the old Border, and a far nobler sort than that, ran in his blood. There was in him a courage, dauntless not pugnacious, hardly fierce, by no possibility ferocious; as of the generous war-horse, gentle in its strength, yet that laughs at the shaking of the spear. — But, above all, be what he might, to be a *reality* was indispensable for him. In his simple Scottish circle, the highest form of manhood attainable or known was that of Christian; the highest Christian was the Teacher of such. Irving's lot was cast. For the foray-spears were all rusted into earth there; Annan Castle had become a Town-hall; and Prophetic Knox had sent tidings thither: Prophetic Knox; and, alas, also Sceptic Hume; and, as the natural consequence, Diplomatic Dundas! In such mixed incongruous element had the young soul to grow.

Grow, nevertheless, he did, with that strong vitality of his; grow and ripen. What the Scottish uncelebrated Irving was, they that have only seen the London celebrated and distorted one can never know. Bodily and spiritually, perhaps there was not, in that November, 1822, when he first arrived here, a man more full of genial energetic life in all these Islands.

By a fatal chance, Fashion cast her eye on him, as on some impersonation of Novel-Cameronianism, some wild Product of Nature from the wild mountains; Fashion crowded round him, with her meteor lights and Bacchic dances; breathed her foul incense on him; intoxicating, poisoning. One may say, it was his own nobleness that forwarded such ruin; the excess of his sociability and sympathy, of his value for the suffrages and sympathies of men. Siren songs, as of a new Moral Reformation (sons of Mammon, and high sons of Belial and Beelzebub, to become sons of God, and the gumflowers of Almack's to be made living roses in a new Eden), sound in the inexperienced ear and heart. Most seductive, most delusive! Fashion went her idle way, to gaze on Egyptian Crocodiles, Iroquois Hunters, or what else there might be; forgot this man, — who unhappily could not in his turn forget. The intoxicating poison had been swallowed; no force of natural health could cast it out. Unconsciously, for most part in deep unconsciousness, there was now the impossibility to live neglected; to walk on the quiet paths, where alone it is well with us. Singularity must henceforth succeed Singularity. O foulest Circean draught, thou poison of Popular Applause! madness is in thee, and death; thy end is Bedlam and the Grave. For the last seven years, Irving, forsaken by the world, strove either to recall it, or to forsake it; shut himself up in a lesser world of ideas and persons, and lived isolated there. Neither in this was there health: for this man such isolation was not fit, such ideas, such persons.

One light still shone on him; alas, through a medium more and more turbid: the light from Heaven. His Bible was there, wherein must lie healing for all sorrows. To the Bible he more and more exclusively addressed himself. If it is the written Word of God, shall it not be the acted Word too? Is it mere sound, then; black printer's-ink on white rag-paper? A half-man could have passed on without answering; a whole man must answer. Hence Prophecies of Millenniums, Gifts of Tongues, — whereat Orthodoxy prims herself into decent wonder, and waves her, Avaunt! Irving clave to his Belief, as to his soul's soul; followed it whithersoever, through earth or air, it might lead him; toiling as never man toiled to spread it, to gain the world's ear for it, — in vain. Ever wilder waxed the confusion without and within. The misguided noble-minded had now nothing left to do but die. He died the death of the true and brave. His last words, they say, were: "In life and in death I am the Lord's." — Amen! Amen!

One who knew him well, and may with good cause love him, has said: "But for Irving, I had never known what the communion of man with man means. His was the freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul mine ever came in contact with: I call him, on the whole, the best man I have ever, after trial enough, found in this world, or now hope to find.

"The first time I saw Irving was six-and-twenty years ago, in his native town, Annan. He was fresh from Edinburgh, with College prizes, high character and promise; he had come to see our Schoolmaster, who had also been his. We heard of famed Professors, of high matters classical, mathematical, a whole Wonderland of Knowledge: nothing but joy, health, hopefulness without end, looked out from the blooming young man. The last time I saw him was three months ago, in London. Friendliness still beamed in his eyes, but now from amid unquiet fire; his face was flaccid, wasted, unsound; hoary as with extreme age: he was trembling over the brink of the grave. — Adieu, thou first Friend; adieu, while this confused Twilight of Existence lasts! Might we meet where Twilight has become Day!"

THE DIAMOND NECKLACE.[1]

[1837.]

CHAPTER I.

AGE OF ROMANCE.

The Age of Romance has not ceased; it never ceases; it does not, if we will think of it, so much as very sensibly decline. "The passions are repressed by social forms; great passions no longer show themselves?" Why, there are passions still great enough to replenish Bedlam, for it never wants tenants; to suspend men from bedposts, from improved-drops at the west end of Newgate. A passion that explosively shivers asunder the Life it took rise in, ought to be regarded as considerable: more no passion, in the highest heyday of Romance, yet did. The passions, by grace of the Supernal and also of the Infernal Powers (for both have a hand in it), can never fail us.

And then, as to "social forms," be it granted that they are of the most buckram quality, and bind men up into the pitifulest strait-laced commonplace existence, — you ask, Where is the Romance? In the Scotch way one answers, Where is it not? That very spectacle of an Immortal Nature, with faculties and destiny extending through Eternity, hampered and bandaged up, by nurses, pedagogues, posture-masters, and the tongues of innumerable old women (named "force of public opinion"); by prejudice, custom, want of knowledge, want of money, want of strength, into, say, the meagre Pattern-Figure that, in these days, meets you in all thoroughfares: a "god-created Man," all but abnegating the character of Man; forced to exist, automatized, mummy-wise (scarcely in rare moments audible or visible from amid his wrappages and cerements), as Gentleman or Gigman;[1] and so selling his birthright of Eternity for the three daily meals, poor at best, which Time yields: — is not this spectacle itself highly romantic, tragical, if we had eyes to look at it? The high-born (highest-born, for he came out of Heaven) lies drowning in the despicablest puddles; the priceless gift of Life, which he can have but *once*, for he waited a whole Eternity to be born, and now has a whole Eternity waiting to see what he will do when born, — *this* priceless gift we see strangled slowly out of him by innumerable packthreads; and there remains of the glorious Possibility, which we fondly named Man, nothing but an inanimate mass of foul loss and disappointment, which we wrap in shrouds and bury underground, — surely with well-merited tears. To the Thinker here lies Tragedy enough; the epitome and marrow of all Tragedy whatsoever.

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[1] Fraser's Magazine, Nos. 85 and 86.

But so few are Thinkers? Ay, Reader, so few think; there is the rub! Not one in the thousand has the smallest turn for thinking; only for passive dreaming and hearsaying, and active babbling by rote. Of the eyes that men do glare withal so few can *see*. Thus is the world become such a fearful confused Treadmill; and each man's task has got entangled in his neighbor's, and pulls it awry; and the Spirit of Blindness, Falsehood and Distraction, justly named the Devil, continually maintains himself among us; and even hopes (were it not for the Opposition, which by God's grace will also maintain itself) to become supreme. Thus too, among other things, has the Romance of Life gone wholly out of sight: and all History, degenerating into empty invoice-lists of Pitched Battles and Changes of Ministry; or, still worse, into "Constitutional History," or "Philosophy of History," or "Philosophy teaching by Experience," is become dead, as the Almanacs of other years, — to which species of composition, indeed, it bears, in several points of view, no inconsiderable affinity.

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[1] "I always considered him a respectable man. — What do you mean by respectable? He kept a Gig." — *Thurtell's Trial.*

"Of all blinds that shut up men's vision," says one, "the worst is Self." How true! How doubly true, if Self, assuming her cunningest, yet miserablest disguise, come on us, in never-ceasing, all-obscuring reflexes from the innumerable Selves of others; not as Pride, not even as real Hunger, but only as Vanity, and the shadow of an imaginary Hunger for Applause; under the name of what we call "Respectability"! Alas now for our Historian: to his other spiritual deadness (which however, so long as he physically breathes, cannot be considered *complete*) this sad new magic influence is added! Henceforth his Histories must all be screwed up into the "dignity of History." Instead of looking fixedly at the *Thing*, and first of all, and beyond all, endeavoring to *see* it, and fashion a living Picture of it, not a wretched politico-metaphysical Abstraction of it, he has now quite other matters to look to. The Thing lies shrouded, invisible, in thousand-fold hallucinations, and foreign air-images: What did the Whigs say of it? What did the Tories? The Priests? The Freethinkers? Above all, What will my own listening circle say of *me* for what I say of it? And then his Respectability in general, as a literary gentleman; his not despicable talent for philosophy! Thus is our poor Historian's faculty directed mainly on two objects: the Writing and the Writer, both of which are quite extraneous; and the Thing written of fares as we see. Can it be wonderful that Histories, wherein open lying is not permitted, are unromantic? Nay, our very Biographies, how stiff-starched, foisonless, hollow! They stand there respectable; and — what more? Dumb idols; with a skin of delusively painted waxwork; inwardly empty, or full of rags and bran. In our England especially, which in these days is become the chosen land of Respectability, Life-writing has dwindled to the sorrowfulest condition; it requires a man to be some disrespectable, ridiculous Boswell before he can write a tolerable Life. Thus too, strangely enough, the only Lives worth reading are those of Players, emptiest and poorest of the sons of Adam; who nevertheless were sons of his, and brothers of ours; and by the nature of the case had already bidden Respectability good-day. Such bounties, in this as in infinitely deeper matters, does Respectability shower down on us. Sad are thy doings, O *Gig;* sadder than those of Juggernaut's Car: that, with huge wheel, suddenly crushes asunder the bodies of men; thou, in thy light-bobbing Long-Acre springs, gradually winnowest away their souls!

Depend upon it, for one thing, good Reader, no age ever seemed the Age of Romance to *itself.* Charlemagne, let the Poets talk as they will, had his own provocations in the world: what with selling of his poultry and pot-herbs, what with wanton daughters carrying secretaries through the snow; and, for instance, that hanging of the Saxons over the Weser-bridge (four thousand of them, they say, at one bout), it seems to me that the Great Charles had his temper ruffled at times. Roland of Roncesvalles too, we see well in thinking of it, found rainy weather as well as sunny; knew what it was to have hose need darning; got tough beef to chew, or even went dinnerless; was saddle-sick, calumniated, constipated (as his madness too clearly indicates); and oftenest felt, I doubt not, that this was a very Devil's world, and he, Roland himself, one of the sorriest caitiffs there. Only in long subsequent days, when the tough beef, the constipation and the calumny had clean vanished, did it all begin to seem Romantic, and your Turpins and Ariostos found music in it. So, I say, is it *ever!* And the more, as your true hero, your true Roland, is ever *unconscious* that he is a hero: this is a condition of all greatness.

In our own poor Nineteenth Century the Writer of these lines has been fortunate enough to see not a few glimpses of Romance; he imagines this Nineteenth is hardly a whit less romantic than that Ninth, or any other, since centuries began. Apart from Napoleon, and the Dantons and Mirabeaus, whose fire-words of public speaking, and fire-whirlwinds of cannon and musketry, which for a season darkened the air, are perhaps at bottom but superficial phenomena, he has witnessed, in remotest places, much that could be called romantic, even miraculous. He has witnessed overhead the infinite Deep, with greater and lesser lights, bright-rolling, silent-beaming, hurled forth by the Hand of God: around him and under his feet, the wonderfulest Earth, with her winter snow-storms and her summer spice-airs; and, unaccountablest of all, *himself* standing there. He stood in the lapse of Time; he saw Eternity behind him, and before him. The all-encircling mysterious tide of FORCE, thousand-fold (for from force of Thought to force of Gravitation what an interval!) billowed shoreless on; bore him too along with it, — he too was part of it. From its bosom rose and vanished, in perpetual change, the lordliest Real-Phantasmagory, which men name *Being;* and ever anew rose and vanished; and ever that lordliest many-colored scene was full, another yet the same. Oak-trees fell, young acorns sprang: Men too, new-sent from the Unknown, he met, of tiniest size, who waxed into stature, into strength of sinew, passionate fire and light: in other men the light was growing dim, the sinews all feeble; they sank, motionless, into ashes, into invisibility; returned *back* to the Unknown, beckoning him their mute farewell. He wanders still by the parting-spot; cannot hear *them;* they are far, how far! —

It was a sight for angels, and archangels; for, indeed, God himself had made it wholly. One many-glancing asbestos-thread in the Web of Universal-History, spirit-woven, it rustled there, as with the howl of mighty winds, through that "wild-roaring Loom of Time." Generation after generation, hundreds of them or thousands of them, from the unknown Beginning, so loud, so stormful-busy, rushed torrent-wise, thundering down, down; and fell all silent, — nothing but some feeble re-echo, which grew ever feebler, struggling up; and Oblivion swallowed them *all.* Thousands more, to the unknown Ending, will follow: and *thou* here, of this present one, hangest as a drop, still sun-gilt, on the giddy edge; one moment, while the Darkness has not yet ingulfed thee. O Brother! is *that* what thou callest prosaic; of small interest? Of small interest and for *thee?* Awake, poor troubled sleeper: shake off thy torpid nightmare-dream; look, see, behold it, the Flame-image; splendors high as Heaven, terrors deep as Hell: this is God's Creation; this is Man's Life! — Such things has the Writer of these lines witnessed, in this poor Nineteenth Century of ours;

and what are all such to the things he yet hopes to witness? Hopes, with truest assurance. "I have painted so much," said the good Jean Paul, in his old days, "and I have never seen the Ocean: — the Ocean of Eternity I shall not fail to see!"

Such being the intrinsic quality of this Time, and of all Time whatsoever, might not the Poet who chanced to walk through it find objects enough to paint? What object soever he fixed on, were it the meanest of the mean, let him but paint it in its actual truth, as it swims there, in such environment; world-old, yet new and never-ending; an indestructible portion of the miraculous All, — his picture of it were a Poem. How much more if the object fixed on were not mean, but one already wonderful; the mystic "actual truth" of which, if it lay not on the surface, yet shone through the surface, and invited even Prosaists to search for it!

The present Writer, who unhappily belongs to that class, has nevertheless a firmer and firmer persuasion of two things: first, as was seen, that Romance exists; secondly, that now, and formerly, and evermore it exists, strictly speaking, in Reality alone. The thing that *is*, what can be *so* wonderful; what, especially to us that *are*, can have such significance? Study Reality, he is ever and anon saying to himself; search out deeper and deeper *its* quite endless mystery: see it, know it; then, whether thou wouldst learn from it, and again teach; or weep over it, or laugh over it, or love it, or despise it, or in any way relate thyself to it, thou hast the firmest enduring basis: *that* hieroglyphic page is one thou canst read on forever, find new meaning in forever.

Finally, and in a word, do not the critics teach us: "In whatsoever thing thou hast thyself felt interest, in that or in nothing hope to inspire others with interest"? — In partial obedience to all which, and to many other principles, shall the following small Romance of the *Diamond Necklace* begin to come together. A small Romance, let the reader again and again assure himself, which is no brain-web of mine, or of any other foolish man's; but a fraction of that mystic "spirit-woven web," from the "Loom of Time," spoken of above. It is an actual transaction that happened in this Earth of ours. Wherewith our whole business, as already urged, is to paint it truly.

For the rest, an earnest inspection, faithful endeavor has not been wanting, on our part; nor, singular as it may seem, the strictest regard to chronology, geography (or rather in this case, topography), documentary evidence, and what else true historical research would yield. Were there but on the reader's part a kindred openness, a kindred spirit of endeavor! Beshone strongly, on both sides, by such united twofold Philosophy, this poor opaque Intrigue of the *Diamond Necklace* might become quite translucent between us; transfigured, lifted up into the serene of Universal-History; and might hang there like a smallest Diamond Constellation, visible without telescope, — so long as it could.

CHAPTER II.

THE NECKLACE IS MADE.

HERR, or as he is now called Monsieur, Boehmer, to all appearance wanted not that last infirmity of noble and ignoble minds, — a love of fame; he was destined also to be famous more than enough. His outlooks into the world were rather of a smiling character: he has long since exchanged his guttural speech, as far as possible, for a nasal one; his rustic Saxon fatherland for a polished city of Paris, and thriven there. United in partnership with worthy Monsieur Bassange, a sound practical man, skilled in the valuation of all precious stones, in the management of workmen, in the judgment of their work, he already sees himself among the highest of his guild: nay, rather the very highest, — for he has secured, by purchase and hard money paid, the title of King's Jeweller; and can enter the Court itself, leaving all other Jewellers, and even innumerable Gentlemen, Gigmen and small Nobility, to languish in the vestibule. With the costliest ornaments in his pocket, or borne after him by assiduous shop-boys, the happy Boehmer sees high drawing-rooms and sacred *ruelles* fly open, as with talismanic *Sesame;* and the brightest eyes of the whole world grow brighter: to him alone of men the Unapproachable reveals herself in mysterious *négligée;* taking and giving counsel. Do not, on all gala-days and gala-nights, his works praise him? On the gorgeous robes of State, on Court-dresses and Lords' stars, on the diadem of Royalty; better still, on the swan-neck of Beauty, and her queenly garniture from plume-bearing aigrette to shoe-buckle on fairy-slipper, — that blinding play of colors is Boehmer's doing: he is *Joaillier-Bijoutier de la Reine.*

Could the man but have been content with it! He could not: Icarus-like, he must mount too high; have his wax-wings melted, and descend prostrate, — amid a cloud of vain goose-quills. One day, a fatal day (of some year, probably, among the *Seventies* of last Century [1]), it struck Boehmer: Why should not I, who, as Most Christian King's Jeweller, am properly first Jeweller of the Universe, — make a Jewel which the Universe has not matched? Nothing can prevent thee, Boehmer, if thou have the skill to do it. Skill or no skill, answers he, I have the ambition: my Jewel, if not the beautifulest, shall be the dearest. Thus was the Diamond Necklace determined on.

Did worthy Bassange give a willing, or a reluctant consent? In any case he consents; and co-operates. Plans are sketched, consultations held, stucco models made; by money or credit the costliest diamonds come in; cunning craftsmen cut them, set them: proud Boehmer sees the work go prosperously on. Proud man! Behold him on a morning after breakfast: he has stepped down to the innermost workshop, before sallying out; stands there with his laced three-cornered hat, cane under arm; drawing on his gloves: with nod, with nasal-guttural word, he gives judicious confirmation, judicious abnegation, censure and approval. A still joy is dawning over that bland, blond face of his; he can think, while in many a sacred boudoir he visits the Unapproachable, that an *opus magnum*, of which the world wotteth not, is progressing. At length comes a morning when care has terminated, and joy can not only dawn but shine; the Necklace, which shall be famous and world-famous, is made.

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[1] Except that Madame Campan (*Mémoires*, tome ii.) says the Necklace "was intended for Du Barry," one cannot discover, within many years, the date of its manufacture. Du Barry went "into half-pay" on the 10th of May, 1774, — the day when her king died.

Made we call it, in conformity with common speech: but properly it was not made; only, with more or less spirit of method, arranged and agglomerated. What spirit of method lay in it, might be made; nothing more. But to tell the various Histories of those various Diamonds, from the first making of them; or even, omitting all the rest, from the first digging of them in the far Indian mines! How they lay, for uncounted ages and æons (under the uproar and splashing of such Deucalion Deluges, and Hutton Explosions, with steam enough, and Werner Submersions), silently imbedded in the rock; did nevertheless, when their hour came, emerge from it, and first behold the glorious Sun smile on them, and with their many-colored glances smiled back on him. How they served next, let us say, as eyes of Heathen Idols, and received worship. How they had then, by fortune of war or theft, been knocked out; and exchanged among camp-sutlers for a little spirituous liquor, and bought by Jews, and worn as signets on the fingers of tawny or white Majesties; and again been lost, with the fingers too, and perhaps life (as by Charles the Rash, among the mud-ditches of Nanci), in old-forgotten glorious victories: and so, through innumerable varieties of fortune, — had come at last to the cutting-wheel of Boehmer; to be united, in strange fellowship, with comrades also blown together from all ends of the Earth, each with a History of its own! Could these aged stones, the youngest of them Six Thousand years of age and upwards, but have spoken, *there* were an Experience for Philosophy to teach by! — But now, as was said, by little caps of gold, and daintiest rings of the same, they are all being, so to speak, enlisted under Boehmer's flag, — made to take rank and file, in new order, no Jewel asking his neighbor whence he came; and parade there for a season. For a season only; and then — to disperse, and enlist anew *ad infinitum.* In such inexplicable wise are Jewels, and

Men also, and indeed all earthly things, jumbled together and asunder, and shovelled and wafted to and fro, in our inexplicable chaos of a World. This was what Boehmer called *making* his Necklace.

So, in fact, do other men speak, and with even less reason. How many men, for example, hast thou heard talk of making money; of making, say, a million and a half of money? Of which million and half, how much, if one were to look into it, had they *made?* The accurate value of their Industry; not a sixpence more. Their making, then, was but, like Boehmer's, a clutching and heaping together; — by and by to be followed also by a dispersion. Made? Thou too vain individual! were these towered ashlar edifices; were these fair bounteous leas, with their bosky umbrages and yellow harvests; and the sunshine that lights them from above, and the granite rocks and fire-reservoirs that support them from below, made by *thee?* I think, by another. The very shilling that thou hast was dug, by man's force, in Carinthia and Paraguay; smelted sufficiently; and stamped, as would seem, not without the advice of our late Defender of the Faith, his Majesty George the Fourth. Thou hast it, and holdest it; but whether, or in what sense, thou hast *made* any farthing of it, thyself canst not say. If the courteous reader ask, What things, then, are made by man? I will answer him, Very few indeed. A Heroism, a Wisdom (a god-given Volition that has realized itself), is made now and then: for example, some five or six Books, since the Creation, have been made. Strange that there are not more: for surely every encouragement is held out. Could I, or thou, happy reader, but make one, the world would let us keep it unstolen for Fourteen whole years, — and take what we could get for it.

But, in a word, Monsieur Boehmer has made his Necklace, what he calls made it: happy man is he. From a Drawing, as large as reality, kindly furnished by "Taunay, Printseller, of the Rue d'Enfer;"[1] and again, in late years, by the Abbé

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[1] Frontispiece of the "*Affaire du Collier*, Paris, 1785;" wherefrom Georgel's Editor has copied it. This "*Affaire du Collier*, Paris, 1785," is not properly a Book; but a bound Collection of such Law-Papers (*Mémoires pour* &c.) as were

Georgel, in the Second Volume of his *Mémoires*, curious readers can still fancy to themselves what a princely Ornament it was. A row of seventeen glorious diamonds, as large almost as filberts, encircle, not too tightly, the neck, a first time. Looser, gracefully fastened thrice to these, a three-wreathed festoon, and pendants enough (simple pear-shaped, multiple star-shaped, or clustering amorphous) encircle it, enwreath it, a second time. Loosest of all, softly flowing round from behind, in priceless catenary, rush down two broad threefold rows; seem to knot themselves, round a very Queen of Diamonds, on the bosom; then rush on, again separated, as if

printed and emitted by the various parties in that famed "Necklace Trial." These Law-Papers, bound into Two Volumes quarto; with Portraits, such as the Printshops yielded them at the time; likewise with patches of *MS.*, containing Notes, Pasquinade-songs, and the like, of the most unspeakable character occasionally, — constitute this "*Affaire du Collier;*" which the Paris Dealers in Old Books can still procure there. It is one of the largest collections of Falsehoods that exists in print; and, unfortunately, still, after all the narrating and history there has been on the subject, forms our chief means of getting at the truth of that Transaction. The First Volume contains some Twenty-one *Mémoires pour:* not, of course, Historical statements of truth; but Culprits' and Lawyers' statements of what they wished to be believed; each party *lying* according to his ability to lie. To reach the truth, or even any honest guess at the truth, the immensities of rubbish must be sifted, contrasted, rejected: what grain of historical evidence may lie at the bottom is then attainable. Thus, as this Transaction of the Diamond Necklace has been called the "Largest Lie of the Eighteenth Century," so it comes to us borne, not unfitly, on a whole illimitable dim Chaos of Lies!

Nay, the Second Volume, entitled *Suite de l'Affaire du Collier*, is still stranger. It relates to the Intrigue and Trial of one Bette d'Etienville, who represents himself as a poor lad that had been kidnapped, blindfolded, introduced to beautiful Ladies, and engaged to get husbands for them; as setting out on this task, and gradually getting quite bewitched and bewildered; — most indubitably, going on to bewitch and bewilder other people on all hands of him: the whole *in consequence* of this "Necklace Trial," and the noise it was making! Very curious. The Lawyers did verily busy themselves with this affair of Bette's; there are scarecrow Portraits given, that stood in the Printshops, and no man can know whether the Originals ever so much as existed. It is like the Dream *of* a Dream. The human mind stands stupent; ejaculates the wish that such Gulf of Falsehood would close itself, — before general Delirium supervene, and the Speech of Man become mere incredible meaningless jargon, like that of choughs and daws. Even from Bette, however, by assiduous sifting, one gathers a particle of truth here and there.

there were length in plenty; the very tassels of them were a fortune for some men. And now lastly, two other inexpressible threefold rows, also with their tassels, will, when the Necklace is on and clasped, unite themselves behind into a doubly inexpressible *six*fold row; and so stream down, together or asunder, over the hindneck,—we may fancy, like lambent Zodiacal or Aurora-Borealis fire.

All these on a neck of snow slight-tinged with rose-bloom, and within it royal Life: amidst the blaze of lustres; in sylphish movements, espiegleries, coquetries, and minuet-mazes; with every movement a flash of star-rainbow colors, bright almost as the movements of the fair young soul it emblems! A glorious ornament; fit only for the Sultana of the World. Indeed, only attainable by such; for it is valued at 1,800,000 livres; say, in round numbers, and sterling money, between eighty and ninety thousand pounds.

CHAPTER III.

THE NECKLACE CANNOT BE SOLD.

MISCALCULATING Boehmer! The Sultana of the Earth shall never wear that Necklace of thine; no neck, either royal or vassal, shall ever be the lovelier for it. In the present distressed state of our finances, with the American War raging round us, where thinkest thou are eighty thousand pounds to be raised for such a thing? In this hungry world, thou fool, these five hundred and odd Diamonds, good only for looking at, are intrinsically worth less to us than a string of as many dry Irish potatoes, on which a famishing Sansculotte might fill his belly. Little knowest thou, laughing Joaillier-Bijoutier, great in thy pride of place, in thy pride of *savoir-faire,* what the world has in store for thee. Thou laughest there; by and by thou wilt laugh on the wrong side of thy face mainly.

While the Necklace lay in stucco effigy, and the stones of it were still "circulating in Commerce," Du Barry's was the neck it was meant for. Unhappily, as all dogs, male and female, have but their day, her day is done; and now (so busy has Death been) she sits retired, on mere half-pay, without prospects, at Saint-Cyr. A generous France will buy no more neck-ornaments for *her:* — O Heaven! the Guillotine-axe is already forging (North, in Swedish Dalecarlia, by sledge-hammers and fire; South too, by taxes and *tailles*) that will shear her neck in twain!

But, indeed, what of Du Barry? A foul worm; hatched by royal heat, on foul composts, into a flaunting butterfly; now diswinged, and again a worm! Are there not Kings' Daughters and Kings' Consorts; is not Decoration the first wish of a female heart, — often also, if such heart is empty, the last? The Portuguese Ambassador is here, and his rigorous Pombal is no longer Minister: there is an Infanta in Portugal, purposing by Heaven's blessing to wed. — Singular! the Portuguese Ambassador, though without fear of Pombal, praises, but will not purchase.

Or why not our own loveliest Marie-Antoinette, once Dauphiness only; now every inch a Queen: what neck in the whole Earth would it beseem better? It is fit only for her. — Alas, Boehmer! King Louis has an eye for diamonds but he too is without overplus of money: his high Queen herself answers queenlike, "We have more need of Seventy-fours than of Necklaces." *Laudatur et alget!* — Not without a qualmish feeling, we apply next to the Queen and King of the Two Sicilies.[1] In vain, O Boehmer! In crowned heads there is no hope for thee. Not a crowned head of them can spare the eighty thousand pounds. The age of Chivalry is gone, and that of Bankruptcy is come. A dull, deep, presaging movement rocks all thrones; Bankruptcy is beating down the gate, and no Chancellor can longer barricade her out. She will enter; and the shoreless fire-lava of DEMOCRACY is at her back! Well may Kings, a second time, "sit still with awful eye," and think of far other things than Necklaces.

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[1] See *Mémoires de Campan,* ii. 1–26.

Thus for poor Boehmer are the mournfulest days and nights appointed; and this high-promising year (1780, as we laboriously guess and gather) stands blacker than all others in his calendar. In vain shall he, on his sleepless pillow, more and more desperately revolve the problem; it is a problem of the insoluble sort, a true "irreducible case of Cardan:" the Diamond Necklace will not sell.

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CHAPTER IV.

AFFINITIES: THE TWO FIXED-IDEAS.

Nevertheless a man's little Work lies not isolated, stranded; a whole busy World, a whole native-element of mysterious never-resting Force, environs it; will catch it up; will carry it forward, or else backward: always, infallibly, either as living growth, or at worst as well-rotted manure, the Thing Done will come to use. Often, accordingly, for a man that had finished any little work, this were the most interesting question › In such a boundless whirl of a world, what hook will it be, and what hooks, that shall catch up this little work of mine; and whirl *it* also, — through such a dance? A question, we need not say, which, in the simplest of cases, would bring the whole Royal Society to a nonplus. — Good Corsican Letitia! while thou nursest thy little Napoleon, and he answers thy mother-smile with those deep eyes of his, a world-famous French Revolution, with Federations of the *Champ de Mars,* and September Massacres, and Bakers' Customers *en queue,* is getting ready: many a Danton and Desmoulins; prim-visaged, Tartuffe-looking Robespierre, as yet all schoolboys; and Marat weeping bitter rheum, as he pounds horse-drugs, — are preparing the fittest arena for him!

Thus too, while poor Boehmer is busy with those Diamonds of his, picking them "out of Commerce," and his craftsmen are grinding and setting them; a certain ecclesiastical Coadjutor and Grand Almoner, and prospective

Commendator and Cardinal, is in Austria, hunting and giving suppers; for whom mainly it is that Boehmer and his craftsmen so employ themselves. Strange enough, once more! The foolish Jeweller at Paris, making foolish trinkets; the foolish Ambassador at Vienna, making blunders and debaucheries: these Two, all uncommunicating, wide asunder as the Poles, are hourly forging for each other the wonderfulest hook-and-eye; which will hook them together, one day, — into artificial Siamese-Twins, for the astonishment of mankind.

Prince Louis de Rohan is one of those select mortals born to honors, as the sparks fly upwards; and, alas, also (as all men are) to troubles no less. Of his genesis and descent much might be said, by the curious in such matters; yet perhaps, if we weigh it well, intrinsically little. He can, by diligence and faith, be traced back some hand-breadth or two, some century or two; but after that, merges in the mere "blood-royal of Brittany;" long, long on this side of the Northern Immigrations, he is not so much as to be sought for; — and leaves the whole space onwards from that, into the bosom of Eternity, a blank, marked only by one point, the Fall of Man! However, and what alone concerns us, his kindred, in these quite recent times, have been much about the Most Christian Majesty; could there pick up what was going. In particular, they have had a turn of some continuance for Cardinalship, and Commendatorship. Safest trades these, of the calm, do-nothing sort: in the do-something line, in Generalship, or such like (witness poor Cousin Soubise at Rossbach[1]), they might not fare so well. In any case, the actual Prince Louis, Coadjutor at Strasburg, while his uncle the Cardinal-Archbishop has not yet deceased, and left him his dignities, but only fallen sick, already takes his place on one grandest occasion: he, thrice-happy Coadjutor, receives the fair, young, trembling Dauphiness, Marie-Antoinette, on her first entrance into France; and can there, as Ceremonial Fugleman, with fit bearing and semblance (being a tall man of six-and-thirty), do the needful. Of his other performances up to this date, a refined History had rather say nothing.

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[1] Here is the Epigram they made against him on occasion of Rossbach, — in that "Despotism tempered by Epigrams," which France was then said to be: —

"Soubise dit, la lanterne à la main,
J'ai beau chercher, où diable est mon Armée?
Elle était là pourtant hier matin:
Me l'a-t-on prise, ou l'aurais-je égarée? —
Que vois-je, ô ciel! que mon âme est ravie!
Prodige heureux! la voilà, la voilà! —
Ah, ventrebleu! qu'est-ce donc que cela?
Je me trompais, c'est l'Armée Ennemie!"

LACRETELLE, ii. 206.

In fact, if the tolerating mind will meditate it with any sympathy, what could poor Rohan perform? Performing needs light, needs strength, and a firm clear footing; all of which had been denied him. Nourished, from birth, with the choicest physical spoon-meat, indeed; yet also, with no better spiritual Doctrine and Evangel of Life than a French Court of Louis the Well-beloved could yield; gifted moreover, and this too was but a new perplexity for him, with shrewdness enough to see through much, with vigor enough to despise much; unhappily, not with vigor enough to spurn it from him, and be forever enfranchised of it, — he awakes, at man's stature, with man's wild desires, in a World of the merest incoherent Lies and Delirium; himself a nameless Mass of delirious Incoherences, — covered over at most, and held in a little, by conventional Politesse, and a Cloak of prospective Cardinal's Plush. Are not intrigues, might Rohan say, the industry of this our Universe; nay is not the Universe itself, at bottom, properly an intrigue? A Most Christian Majesty, in the *Parc-aux-cerfs;* he, thou seest, is the god of this lower world; in the fight of Life, our war-banner and celestial *En-touto-nika* is a Strumpet's Petticoat: these are thy gods, O France! — What, in such singular circumstances, could poor Rohan's creed and world-theory be, that he should "perform" thereby? Atheism? Alas, no; not even Atheism: only Machiavelism; and the indestructible faith that "ginger is hot in the mouth." Get ever new and better *ginger*, therefore; chew it ever the more diligently: 'tis all thou hast to look to, and that only for a day.

Ginger enough, poor Louis de Rohan: too much of ginger!

Whatsoever of it, for the five senses, money, or money's worth, or backstairs diplomacy, can buy; nay for the sixth sense too, the far spicier ginger, Antecedence of thy fellow-creatures,—merited, at least, by infinitely finer housing than theirs. Coadjutor of Strasburg, Archbishop of Strasburg, Grand Almoner of France, Commander of the Order of the Holy Ghost, Cardinal, Commendator of St. Wast d'Arras (one of the fattest benefices here below): all these shall be housings for Monseigneur: to all these shall his Jesuit Nursing-mother, our vulpine Abbé Georgel, through fair court-weather and through foul, triumphantly bear him; and wrap him with them, fat, somnolent Nursling as he is.—By the way, a most assiduous, ever-wakeful Abbé is this Georgel; and wholly Monseigneur's. He has scouts dim-flying, far out, in the great deep of the world's business; has spider-threads that overnet the whole world; himself sits in the centre, ready to run. In vain shall King and Queen combine against Monseigneur: "I was at M. de Maurepas's pillow before six,"—persuasively wagging my sleek coif, and the sleek reynard-head under it; I managed it all for him. Here too, on occasion of Reynard Georgel, we could not but reflect what a singular species of creature your Jesuit must have been. Outwardly, you would say, a man; the smooth semblance of a man: inwardly, to the centre, filled with stone! Yet in all breathing things, even in stone Jesuits, are inscrutable sympathies: how else does a Reynard Abbé so loyally give himself, soul and body, to a somnolent Monseigneur;—how else does the poor Tit, to the neglect of its own eggs and interests, nurse up a huge lumbering Cuckoo; and think its pains all paid, if the soot-brown Stupidity will merely grow bigger and bigger!—Enough, by Jesuitic or other means, Prince Louis de Rohan shall be passively kneaded and baked into Commendator of St. Wast and much else; and truly *such* a Commendator as hardly, since King Thierri, first of the *Fainéans*, founded that Establishment, has played his part there.

Such, however, have Nature and Art combined together to make Prince Louis. A figure thrice-clothed with honors; with plush, and civic and ecclesiastic garniture of all kinds;

but in itself little other than an amorphous congeries of contradictions, somnolence and violence, foul passions and foul habits. It is by his plush cloaks and wrappages mainly, as above hinted, that such a figure sticks together; what we call "coheres," in any measure; were it not for these, he would flow out boundlessly on all sides. Conceive him farther, with a kind of radical vigor and fire, for he can see clearly at times, and speak fiercely; yet left in this way to stagnate and ferment, and lie overlaid with such floods of fat material: have we not a true image of the shamefulest Mud-volcano, gurgling and sluttishly simmering, amid continual steamy indistinctness, — except, as was hinted, in wind-*gusts;* with occasional terrifico-absurd mud-explosions!

This, garnish it and fringe it never so handsomely, is, alas, the intrinsic character of Prince Louis. A shameful spectacle: such, however, as the world has beheld many times; as it were to be wished, but is not yet to be hoped, the world might behold no more. Nay, are not all possible delirious incoherences, outward and inward, summed up, for poor Rohan, in this one incrediblest incoherence, that *he*, Prince Louis de Rohan, is named Priest, Cardinal of the Church? A debauched, merely libidinous mortal, lying there quite helpless, *dis*solute (as we well say); whom to see Church *Cardinal*, symbolical *Hinge* or main corner of the Invisible Holy in this World, an Inhabitant of Saturn might split with laughing, — if he did not rather swoon with pity and horror!

Prince Louis, as ceremonial fugleman at Strasburg, might have hoped to make some way with the fair young Dauphiness; but seems not to have made any. Perhaps, in those great days, so trying for a fifteen-years Bride and Dauphiness, the fair Antoinette was too preoccupied: perhaps, in the very face and looks of Prospective-Cardinal Prince Louis, her fair young soul read, all unconsciously, an incoherent *Roué*-ism, bottomless Mud-volcanoism; from which she by instinct rather recoiled.

However, as above hinted, he is now gone, in these years, on Embassy to Vienna: with "four-and-twenty pages [if our remembrance of Abbé Georgel serve] of noble birth," all in scarlet breeches; and such a retinue and parade as drowns even his fat revenue in perennial debt. Above all things, his Jesuit Familiar is with him. For so everywhere they must manage: Eminence Rohan is the cloak, Jesuit Georgel the man or automaton within it. Rohan, indeed, sees Poland a-partitioning; or rather Georgel, with his "masked Austrian" traitor "on the ramparts," sees it for him: but what can he do? He exhibits his four-and-twenty scarlet pages, — who, we find, "smuggle" to quite unconscionable lengths; rides through a Catholic procession, Prospective-Cardinal though he be, because it is too long and keeps him from an appointment; hunts, gallants; gives suppers, Sardanapalus-wise, the finest ever seen in Vienna. Abbé Georgel, as we fancy it was, writes a Despatch in his name "every fortnight;" — mentions in one of these, that "Maria Theresa stands, indeed, with the handkerchief in one hand, weeping for the woes of Poland; but with the sword in the other hand, ready to cut Poland in sections, and take her share."[1] Untimely joke; which proved to Prince Louis the root of unspeakable chagrins! For Minister D'Aiguillon (much against his duty) communicates the Letter to King Louis; Louis to Du Barry, to season her *souper*, and laughs over it: the thing becomes a court-joke; the filially pious Dauphiness hears it, and remembers it. Accounts go, moreover, that Rohan spake censuringly of the Dauphiness to her Mother: this probably is but hearsay and false; the devout Maria Theresa disliked him, and even despised him, and vigorously labored for his recall.

Thus, in rosy sleep and somnambulism, or awake only to quaff the full wine-cup of the Scarlet Woman his Mother, and again sleep and somnambulate, does the Prospective-Cardinal and Commendator pass his days. Unhappy man! This is not a world which was made in sleep; which it is safe to sleep and somnambulate in. In that "loud-roaring Loom of Time" (where above nine hundred millions of hungry Men, for one item, restlessly weave and work), so many threads fly humming from their "eternal spindles;" and swift invisible shuttles, far darting, to the Ends of the World, — complex enough! At this hour, a miserable Boehmer in Paris, whom thou wottest not of, is spinning, of diamonds and gold, a paltry thrum that will go nigh to strangle the life out of thee.

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[1] *Mémoires de l'Abbé Georgel*, ii. 1–220. Abbé Georgel, who has given, in the place referred to, a long solemn Narrative of the Necklace Business, passes for the grand authority on it: but neither will he, strictly taken up, abide scrutiny. He is vague as may be; writing in what is called the "soaped-pig" fashion: yet sometimes you *do* catch him, and hold him. There are hardly above three dates in his whole Narrative. He mistakes several times; perhaps, once or twice, wilfully misrepresents a little. The main incident of the business is misdated by him, almost a twelvemonth. It is to be remembered that the poor Abbé wrote in exile; and with cause enough for prepossessions and hostilities.

Meanwhile Louis the Well-beloved has left, forever, his *Parc-aux-cerfs;* and, amid the scarce-suppressed hootings of the world, taken up his last lodging at St. Denis. Feeling that it was all over (for the small-pox has the victory, and even Du Barry is off), he, as the Abbé Georgel records, "made the *amende honorable* to God" (these are his Reverence's own words); had a true repentance of three days' standing; and so, continues the Abbé, "fell asleep in the Lord." Asleep in the Lord, Monsieur l'Abbé! If such a mass of Laziness and Lust fell asleep in the Lord, *who,* fanciest thou, is it that falls asleep — elsewhere? Enough that he did fall asleep; that thick-wrapt in the Blanket of the Night, under what keeping we ask not, *he* never through endless Time can, for his own or our sins, insult the face of the Sun any more; — and so now we go onward, if not to less degrees of beastliness, yet at least and worst, to cheering varieties of it.

Louis XVI. therefore reigns (and, under the Sieur Gamain, makes locks); his fair Dauphiness has become a Queen. Eminence Rohan is home from Vienna; to condole and congratulate. He bears a Letter from Maria Theresa; hopes the Queen will not forget old Ceremonial Fuglemen, and friends of the Dauphiness. Heaven and Earth! The Dauphiness Queen will not see him; orders the Letter to be *sent* her. The King himself signifies briefly that he "will be asked for when wanted"!

Alas! at Court, our motion is the delicatest, unsurest. We go spinning, as it were, on teetotums, by the edges of bottomless deeps. Rest is fall: so is one false whirl. A moment ago, Eminence Rohan seemed waltzing with the best: but, behold, his teetotum has *carried him over;* there is an inversion of the centre of gravity; and so now, heels uppermost, velocity increasing as the time, space as the square of the time, — he rushes.

On a man of poor Rohan's somnolence and violence, the sympathizing mind can estimate what the effect was. Consternation, stupefaction, the total jumble of blood, brains and nervous spirits; in ear and heart, only universal hubbub, and louder and louder singing of the agitated air. A fall comparable to that of Satan! Men have, indeed, been driven from Court; and borne it, according to ability. Choiseul, in these very years, retired Parthianlike, with a smile or scowl; and drew half the Court-host along with him. Our Wolsey, though once an *Ego et Rex meus,* could journey, it is said, without strait-waistcoat, to his monastery; and there telling beads, look forward to a still longer journey. The melodious, too soft-strung Racine, when his King turned his back on him, emitted one meek wail, and submissively — died. But the case of Coadjutor de Rohan differed from all these. No loyalty was in him, that he should die; no self-help, that he should live; no faith, that he should tell beads. His is a mud-volcanic character; incoherent, mad, from the very foundation of it. Think too, that his Courtiership (for how could any nobleness enter there?) was properly a gambling speculation: the loss of his trump Queen of Hearts can bring nothing but flat unredeemed despair. No other game has he, in this world, — or in the next. And then the exasperating *Why?* The *How came it?* For that Rohanic, or Georgelic, sprightliness of the "handkerchief in one hand, and sword in the other," if indeed that could have caused it all, has quite escaped him. In the name of Friar Bacon's Head, *what* was it? Imagination, with Desperation to drive her, may fly to all points of Space; — and returns with wearied wings, and no tidings. Behold *me here:* this, which is the first grand certainty for man in general, is the first and last and only one for poor Rohan. And then his *Here!* Alas, looking upwards, he can eye, from his burning marl, the azure realms, once his; and Cousin Countess de Marsan, and so many Richelieus, Polignacs, and other happy angels, male and female, all blissfully gyrating there; while he —!

Nevertheless hope, in the human breast, though not in the diabolic, springs eternal. The outcast Rohan bends all his thoughts, faculties, prayers, purposes, to one object; one object he will attain, or go to Bedlam. How many ways he tries; what days and nights of conjecture, consultation; what written unpublished reams of correspondence, protestation, backstairs diplomacy of every rubric! How many suppers has he eaten; how many given, — in vain! It is his morning song, and his evening prayer. From innumerable falls he rises; only to fall again. Behold him even, with his red stockings, at dusk, in the Garden of Trianon: he has bribed the Concierge; will see her Majesty in spite of Etiquette and Fate; peradventure, pitying his long sad King's-evil, she will touch him and heal him. In vain, — says the Female Historian, Campan.[1] The Chariot of Majesty shoots rapidly by, with high-plumed heads in it; Eminence is known by his red stockings, but not looked at, only laughed at, and left standing like a Pillar of Salt.

Thus through ten long years, of new resolve and new despondency, of flying from Saverne to Paris, and from Paris to Saverne, has it lasted; hope deferred making the heart sick. Reynard Georgel and Cousin de Marsan, by eloquence, by influence, and being "at M. de Maurepas's pillow before six," have secured the Archbishopric, the Grand-Almonership; the

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[1] Madame Campan, in her Narrative, and indeed in her *Memoirs* generally, does not seem to *intend* falsehood: this, in the Business of the Necklace, is saying a great deal. She rather, perhaps, intends the producing of an impression; which may have appeared to herself to be the right one. But, at all events, she has, here or elsewhere, no notion of historical rigor; she gives hardly any date, or the like; will tell the same thing, in different places, different ways, &c. There is a tradition that Louis XVIII. revised her *Mémoires* before publication. She requires to be read with scepticism everywhere; but yields something in that way.

Cardinalship (by the medium of Poland); and, lastly, to tinker many rents, and appease the Jews, that fattest Commendatorship, founded by King Thierri the Donothing — perhaps with a view to such cases. All good! languidly croaks Rohan; yet all not the one thing needful; alas, the Queen's eyes do not yet shine on me.

Abbé Georgel admits, in his own polite diplomatic way, that the Mud-volcano was much agitated by these trials; and in time quite changed. Monseigneur deviated into cabalistic courses, after elixirs, philtres, and the philosopher's stone; that is, the volcanic steam grew thicker and heavier: at last by Cagliostro's magic (for Cagliostro and the Cardinal by elective affinity must meet), it sank into the opacity of perfect London fog! So too, if Monseigneur grew choleric; wrapped himself up in reserve, spoke roughly to his domestics and dependents, — were not the terrifico-absurd mud-explosions becoming more frequent? Alas, what wonder? Some nine-and-forty winters have now fled over his Eminence (for it is 1783), and his beard falls white to the shaver; but age for him brings no "benefit of experience." He is possessed by a fixed-idea!

Foolish Eminence! is the Earth grown all barren and of a snuff color, because one pair of eyes in it look on thee askance? Surely thou hast thy Body there yet; and what of soul might from the first reside in it. Nay, a warm, snug Body, with not only five senses (sound still, in spite of much tear and wear), but most eminent clothing, besides; — clothed with authority over much, with red Cardinal's cloak, red Cardinal's hat; with Commendatorship, Grand-Almonership, so kind have thy Fripiers been; with dignities and dominions too tedious to name. The stars rise nightly, with tidings (for thee too, if thou wilt listen) from the infinite Blue; Sun and Moon bring vicissitudes of season; dressing green, with flower-borderings, and cloth of gold, this ancient ever-young Earth of ours, and filling her breasts with all-nourishing mother's milk. Wilt thou work? The whole Encyclopædia (not Diderot's only, but the Almighty's) is there for thee to spread thy broad faculty upon. Or, if thou have no faculty, no Sense, hast thou not, as already suggested, Senses, to the number of five? What victuals thou wishest, command; with what wine savoreth thee, be filled. Already thou art a false lascivious Priest; with revenues of, say, a quarter of a million sterling; and no mind to mend. Eat, foolish Eminence; eat with voracity,—leaving the shot till *afterwards!* In all this the eyes of Marie-Antoinette can neither help thee nor hinder.

And yet what is the Cardinal, dissolute mud-volcano though he be, more foolish herein than all Sons of Adam? Give the wisest of us once a "fixed-idea,"—which, though a temporary madness, who has not had?—and see where his wisdom is! The Chamois-Hunter serves his doomed seven years in the Quicksilver Mines; returns salivated to the marrow of the backbone; and next morning—goes forth to hunt again. Behold Cardalion King of Urinals; with a woful ballad to his mistress's eyebrow! He blows out, Werter-wise, his foolish existence, because *she* will not have it to keep;—heeds not that there are some five hundred millions of other mistresses in this noble Planet; most likely much such as she. O foolish men! They sell their Inheritance (as their Mother did hers), though it is Paradise, for a crotchet: will they not, in every age, dare not only grape-shot and gallows-ropes, but Hell-fire itself, for better sauce to their victuals? My friends, beware of fixed-ideas.

Here, accordingly, is poor Boehmer with one in his head too! He has been hawking his "irreducible case of Cardan," that Necklace of his, these three long years, through all Palaces and Ambassadors' Hotels, over the old "nine Kingdoms," or more of them than there now are: searching, sifting Earth, Sea and Air, for a customer. To take his Necklace in pieces; and so, losing only his manual labor and expected glory, dissolve his fixed-idea, and fixed diamonds, into current ones: this were simply casting out the Devil—from himself; a miracle, and perhaps more! For he too has a Devil, or Devils: one mad object which he strives at; which he too will attain, or go to Bedlam. Creditors, snarling, hound him on from without; mocked Hopes, lost Labors, bear-bait him from within:

to these torments his fixed-idea keeps him chained. In six-and-thirty weary revolutions of the Moon, was it wonderful the man's brain had got dried a little?

Behold, one day, being Court-Jeweller, he too bursts, almost as Rohan had done, into the Queen's retirement, or apartment; flings himself (as Campan again has recorded) at her Majesty's feet; and there, with clasped uplifted hands, in passionate nasal-gutturals, with streaming tears and loud sobs, entreats her to do one of two things: Either to buy his Necklace; or else graciously to vouchsafe him her royal permission to drown himself in the River Seine. Her Majesty, pitying the distracted bewildered state of the man, calmly points out the plain third course: *Dépécez votre Collier*, Take your Necklace in pieces; — adding withal, in a tone of queenly rebuke, that if he would drown himself, he at all times could, without her furtherance.

Ah, *had* he drowned himself, with the Necklace in his pocket; and Cardinal Commendator at his skirts! Kings, above all, beautiful Queens, as far-radiant Symbols on the pinnacles of the world, are so exposed to madmen. Should these two fixed-ideas that beset this beautifulest Queen, and almost burst through her Palace-walls, one day *unite*, and this *not* to jump into the River Seine; — what maddest result may be looked for!

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CHAPTER V.

THE ARTIST.

If the reader has hitherto, in our too figurative language, seen only the figurative hook and the figurative eye, which Boehmer and Rohan, far apart, were respectively fashioning for each other, he shall now see the cunning Milliner (an actual, unmetaphorical *Milliner*) by whom these two individuals, with their two implements, are brought in contact, and hooked together into stupendous artificial Siamese Twins; —

after which the whole nodus and solution will naturally combine and unfold itself.

Jeanne de Saint-Remi, by courtesy or otherwise, Countess, styled also *of Valois*, and even *of France*, has now, in this year of Grace 1783, known the world for some seven-and-twenty summers; and had crooks in her lot. She boasts herself descended, by what is called *natural* generation, from the Blood-Royal of France: Henri Second, before that fatal tourney-lance entered his right eye and ended him, appears to have had, successively or simultaneously, four — unmentionable women: and so, *in vice* of the third of these, came a certain Henri de Saint-Remi into this world; and, as High and Puissant Lord, ate his victuals and spent his days, on an allotted domain of Fontette, near Bar-sur-Aube, in Champagne. Of High and Puissant Lords, at this Fontette, six other generations followed; and thus ultimately, in a space of some two centuries, — succeeded in realizing this brisk little Jeanne de Saint-Remi, here in question. But, ah, what a falling off! The Royal Family of France has well-nigh forgotten its left-hand collaterals: the last High and Puissant Lord (much clipt by his predecessors), falling into drink, and left by a scandalous world to drink his pitcher *dry*, had to alienate by degrees his whole worldly Possessions, down almost to the indispensable, or inexpressibles; and die at last in the Paris Hôtel-Dieu; glad that it was not on the street. So that he has, indeed, given a sort of bastard royal life to little Jeanne, and her little brother; but not the smallest earthly provender to keep it in. The mother, in her extremity, forms the wonderfulest connections; and little Jeanne, and her little brother, go out into the highways to beg.[1]

A charitable Countess Boulainvilliers, struck with the little bright-eyed tatterdemalion from the carriage-window, picks her up; has her scoured, clothed; and rears her, in her fluctuating miscellaneous way, to be, about the age of twenty, a nondescript of Mantua-maker, Soubrette, Court-beggar, Fine-lady, Abigail, and Scion-of-Royalty. Sad combination of trades! The Court, after infinite soliciting, puts one off with a hungry dole of little more than thirty pounds a year. Nay, the audacious Count Boulainvilliers dares, with what purposes he knows best, to offer some suspicious presents![1] Whereupon his good Countess, especially as Mantua-making languishes, thinks it could not but be fit to go down to Bar-sur-Aube; and there see whether no fractions of that alienated Fontette Property, held perhaps on insecure tenure, may, by terror or cunning, be recoverable. Burning her paper patterns, pocketing her pension till more come, Mademoiselle Jeanne sallies out thither, in her twenty-third year.

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[1] *Vie de Jeanne Comtesse de Lamotte* (by Herself), vol. i.

Nourished in this singular way, alternating between saloon and kitchen-table, with the loftiest of pretensions, meanest of possessions, our poor High and Puissant Mantua-maker has realized for herself a "face not beautiful, yet with a certain piquancy;" dark hair, blue eyes; and a character, which the present Writer, a determined student of human nature, declares to be undecipherable. Let the Psychologists try it! Jeanne de Saint-Remi de Valois de France actually lived, and worked, and was: she has even published, at various times, three considerable Volumes of Autobiography, with loose Leaves (in Courts of Justice) of unknown number;[2] wherein he that runs may read, — but not understand. Strange Volumes! more like the screeching of distracted night-birds

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[1] He was of Hebrew descent: grandson of the renowned Jew Bernard, whom Louis XV., and even Louis XIV., used to "walk with in the Royal Garden," when they wanted him to lend them money. See *Souvenirs du Duc de Levis; Mémoires de Duclos,* &c.

[2] Four *Mémoires pour* by her, in this *Affaire du Collier:* like "Lawyers' tongues turned inside out"! Afterwards One Volume, *Mémoires Justificatifs de la Comtesse de* &c. (London, 1788); with Appendix of "Documents" so called. This has also been translated into a kind of English. Then Two Volumes, as quoted above: *Vie de Jeanne de* &c.; printed in London, — by way of extorting money *from Paris.* This latter Lying Autobiography of Lamotte was brought up by French persons in authority. It was the burning of this *Editio Princeps* in the Sèvres Potteries, on the 30th of May, 1792, which raised such a smoke that the Legislative Assembly took alarm; and had an investigation about it, and considerable examining of Potters, &c., till the truth came out. Copies of the Book were speedily reprinted after the Tenth of August. It is in English too; and, except in the Necklace part, is not so entirely distracted as the former.

(suddenly disturbed by the torch of Police-Fowlers), than the articulate utterance of a rational unfeathered biped. Cheerfully admitting these statements to be all lies; we ask, How any mortal could, or should, *so* lie?

The Psychologists, however, commit one sore mistake; that of searching, in every character named human, for something like a conscience. Being mere contemplative recluses, for most part, and feeling that Morality is the heart of Life, they judge that with all the world it is so. Nevertheless, as practical men are aware, Life can go on in excellent vigor without crotchet of that kind. What is the essence of Life? Volition? Go deeper down, you find a much more universal root and characteristic: Digestion. While Digestion lasts, Life cannot, in philosophical language, be said to be extinct: and Digestion will give rise to Volitions enough; at any rate, to Desires and attempts, which may pass for such. He who looks neither before nor after, any farther than the Larder and Stateroom, which latter is properly the finest compartment of the Larder, will need no World-theory, Creed as it is called, or Scheme of Duties: lightly leaving the world to wag as it likes with any theory or none, his grand object is a theory and practice of ways and means. Not goodness or badness is the type of him; only shiftiness or shiftlessness.

And now, disburdened of this obstruction, let the Psychologists consider it under a bolder view. Consider the brisk Jeanne de Saint-Remi de Saint-Shifty as a Spark of vehement Life, not developed into Will of any kind, yet fully into Desires of all kinds, and cast into such a Life-element as we have seen. Vanity and Hunger; a Princess of the Blood, yet whose father had sold his inexpressibles; uncertain whether foster-daughter of a fond Countess, with hopes sky-high, or supernumerary Soubrette; with not enough of mantua-making: in a word, *Gigmanity disgigged;* one of the saddest, pitiable, unpitied predicaments of man! She is of that light unreflecting class, of that light unreflecting sex: *varium semper et mutabile.* And then her Fine-ladyism, though a purseless one: capricious, coquettish, and with all the finer sensibilities of the heart; now in the rackets, now in the sullens; vivid in contradictory resolves; laughing, weeping without reason,—though these acts are said to be signs of reason. Consider too, how she has had to work her way, all along, by flattery and cajolery; wheedling, eavesdropping, namby-pambying: how she needs wages, and knows no other productive trades. Thought can hardly be said to exist in her: only Perception and Device. With an understanding lynx-eyed for the surface of things, but which pierces beyond the surface of nothing; every individual thing (for she has never seized the heart of it) turns up a new face to her every new day, and seems a thing changed, a different thing. Thus sits, or rather vehemently bobs and hovers her vehement mind, in the middle of a boundless many-dancing whirlpool of gilt-shreds, paper-clippings and windfalls,—to which the revolving chaos of my Uncle Toby's Smoke-jack was solidity and regularity. Reader! thou for thy sins must have met with such fair Irrationals; fascinating, with their lively eyes, with their quick snappish fancies; distinguished in the higher circles, in Fashion, even in Literature: they hum and buzz there, on graceful film-wings;—searching nevertheless with the wonderfulest skill for honey; "*un*tamable as flies"!

Wonderfulest skill for honey, we say; and, pray, mark that, as regards this Countess de Saint-Shifty. Her instinct-of-genius is prodigious; her appetite fierce. In any foraging speculation of the private kind, she, unthinking as you call her, will be worth a hundred thinkers. And so of such untamable flies the untamablest, Mademoiselle Jeanne, is now buzzing down, in the Bar-sur-Aube Diligence; to inspect the honey-jars of Fontette; and see and smell whether there be any flaws in them.

Alas, at Fontette, we can, with sensibility, behold straw-roofs we were nursed under; farmers courteously offer cooked milk, and other country messes: but no soul will part with his Landed Property, for which, though cheap, he declares hard money was paid. The honey-jars are all close, then?—However, a certain Monsieur de Lamotte, a tall Gendarme, home on furlough from Lunéville, is now at Bar; pays us attentions; becomes quite particular in his attentions, — for we have a face "with a certain piquancy," the liveliest glib-snappish tongue, the liveliest kittenish manner (not yet hardened into *cat*-hood), with thirty pounds a year and prospects. M. de Lamotte, indeed, is as yet only a private sentinel; but then a private sentinel in the *Gendarmes:* and did not his father die fighting "at the head of his company," at Minden? Why not in virtue of our own Countess-ship dub him too Count; by left-hand collateralism, get him advanced? — Finished before the furlough is done! The untamablest of flies has again buzzed off; in wedlock with M. de Lamotte; if not to get honey, yet to escape spiders; and so lies in garrison at Lunéville, amid coquetries and hysterics, in Gigmanity disgigged, — disconsolate enough.

At the end of four long years (too long), M. de Lamotte, or call him now *Count* de Lamotte, sees good to lay down his fighting-gear (unhappily still only the musket), and become what is by certain moderns called "a Civilian:" not a Civil-law Doctor; merely a Citizen, one who does not live by being killed. Alas, cold eclipse has all along hung over the Lamotte household. Countess Boulainvilliers, it is true, writes in the most feeling manner; but then the Royal Finances are so deranged! Without personal pressing solicitation, on the spot, no Court-solicitor, were his Pension the meagrest, can hope to better it. At Lunéville the sun, indeed, shines; and there is a kind of Life; but only an Un-Parisian, half or quarter Life; the very tradesmen grow clamorous, and no cunningly devised fable, ready-money alone will appease them. Commandant Marquis d'Autichamp[1] agrees with Madame Boulainvilliers that a journey to Paris were the project; whither, also, he himself is just going. Perfidious Commandant Marquis! His plan is seen through: he dares to presume to make love to a Scion-of-Royalty; or to hint that he could dare to presume to do it! Whereupon, indignant Count de Lamotte, as we said, throws up his commission, and down his fire-arms, without further delay. The King loses a tall private sentinel; the World has a new blackleg: and Monsieur and Madame de Lamotte take places in the Diligence for Strasburg.

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[1] He is the same Marquis d'Autichamp who was to "relieve Lyons," and raise the Siege of Lyons, in Autumn, 1793, but could not do it.

Good Foster-mother Boulainvilliers, however, is no longer at Strasburg: she is forward at the Archiepiscopal Palace in Saverne; on a visit there, to his Eminence Cardinal Commendator Grand-Almoner Archbishop Prince Louis de Rohan! Thus, then, has Destiny at last brought it about. Thus, after long wanderings, on paths so far separate, has the time come, in this late year 1783, when, of all the nine hundred millions of the Earth's denizens, these preappointed Two behold each other!

The foolish Cardinal, since no sublunary means, not even bribing of the Trianon Concierge, will serve, has taken to the superlunary: he is here, with his fixed-idea and volcanic vaporosity darkening, under Cagliostro's management, into thicker and thicker opaque, — of the Black-Art itself. To the glance of hungry genius, Cardinal and Cagliostro could not but have meaning. A flush of astonishment, a sigh over boundless wealth (for the mountains of debt lie invisible) in the hands of boundless Stupidity; some vague looming of indefinite hope: all this one can well fancy. But, alas, what, to a high plush Cardinal, is a now insolvent Scion-of-Royalty, — though with a face of some piquancy? The good Foster-mother's visit, in any case, can last but three days; then, amid old namby-pambyings, with effusions of the nobler sensibilities and tears of pity at least for oneself, Countess de Lamotte, and husband, must off with her to Paris, and new possibilities at Court. Only when the sky again darkens, can this vague looming from Saverne look out, by fits, as a cheering weather-sign.

CHAPTER VI.

WILL THE TWO FIXED-IDEAS UNITE?

However, the sky, according to custom, is not long in darkening again. The King's finances, we repeat, are in so distracted a state! No D'Ormesson, no Joly de Fleury, wearied with milking the already dry, will increase that scandalous Thirty Pounds of a Scion-of-Royalty by a single doit. Calonne himself, who has a willing ear and encouraging word for all mortals whatsoever, only with difficulty, and by aid of Madame of France,[1] raises it to some still miserable Sixty-five. Worst of all the good Foster-mother Boulainvilliers, in few months, suddenly dies: the wretched widower, sitting there, with his white handkerchief, to receive condolences, with closed shutters, mortuary tapestries, and sepulchral cressets burning (which, however, the instant the condolences are gone, he blows out, to save oil), has the audacity again, amid crocodile tears, to — drop hints![2] Nay more, he, wretched man in all senses, abridges the Lamotte table; will besiege virtue both in the positive and negative way. The Lamottes, wintry as the world looks, cannot be gone too soon.

As to Lamotte the husband, he, for shelter against much, decisively dives down to the "subterranean shades of Rascaldom;" gambles, swindles; can hope to live, miscellaneously, if not by the Grace of God, yet by the Oversight of the Devil, — for a time. Lamotte the wife also makes her packages: and waving the unseductive Count Boulainvilliers Save-all a disdainful farewell, removes to the *Belle Image* in Versailles; there within wind of Court, in attic apartments, on poor water-gruel board, resolves to await what can betide. So much, in few months of this fateful year 1783, has come and gone.

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[1] See Campan.

[2] *Vie de Jeanne de Lamotte, &c. écrite par elle-même,* vol. i.

Poor Jeanne de Saint-Remi de Lamotte Valois, Ex-Mantuamaker, Scion-of-Royalty! What eye, looking into those bare attic apartments and water-gruel platters of the *Belle Image*, but must, in spite of itself, grow dim with almost a kind of tear for thee! There thou art, with thy quick lively glances, face of a certain piquancy, thy gossamer untamable character, snappish sallies, glib all-managing tongue; thy whole incarnated, garmented and so sharply appetent "spark of Life;" cast down alive into this World, without vote of thine (for the Elective Franchises have not yet got that length); and wouldst so fain live there. Paying scot-and-lot; providing, or fresh-scouring silk court-dresses; "always keeping a gig"! Thou must hawk and shark to and fro, from anteroom to anteroom; become a kind of terror to all men in place, and women that influence such; dance not light Ionic measures, but attendance merely; have weepings, thanksgiving effusions, aulic, almost forensic, eloquence: perhaps eke out thy thin livelihood by some coquetries, in the small way; — and so, most poverty-stricken, cold-blighted, yet with young keen blood struggling against it, spin forward thy unequal feeble thread, which the Atropos-scissors will soon clip!

Surely now, if ever, were that vague looming from Saverne welcome, as a weather-sign. How doubly welcome is his plush Eminence's personal arrival! — for with the earliest spring he has come in person, as he periodically does; vaporific, driven by his fixed-idea.

Genius, of the mechanical-practical kind, what is it but a bringing together of two Forces that fit each other, that will give birth to a third? Ever, from Tubal-cain's time, Iron lay ready hammered; Water, also, was boiling and bursting: nevertheless, for want of a genius, there was as yet no Steam-engine. In his Eminence Prince Louis, in that huge, restless, incoherent Being of his, depend on it, brave Countess, there are Forces deep, manifold; nay, a fixed-idea concentrates the whole huge Incoherence as it were into one Force: cannot the eye of genius discover its *fellow?*

Communing much with the Court *valetaille*, our brave Countess has more than once heard talk of Boehmer, of his

Necklace, and threatened death by water; in the course of gossiping and tattling, this topic from time to time emerges; is commented upon with empty laughter, — as if there lay no farther meaning in it. To the common eye there is indeed none: but to the eye of genius? In some moment of inspiration, the question rises on our brave Lamotte: Were not *this*, of all extant Forces, the cognate one that would unite with Eminence Rohan's? Great moment, light-beaming, fire-flashing; like birth of Minerva; like all moments of Creation! Fancy how pulse and breath flutter, almost stop, in the greatness: the great not Divine Idea, the great Diabolic Idea, is too big for her. — Thought (how often must we repeat it?) rules the world. Fire and, in a less degree, Frost; Earth and Sea (for what is your swiftest ship, or steamship, but a *Thought* — embodied in wood?); Reformed Parliaments, rise and ruin of Nations, — sale of Diamonds: all things obey Thought. Countess de Saint-Remi de Lamotte, by power of Thought, is now a made woman. With force of genius she represses, crushes deep down, her Undivine Idea; bends all her faculty to realize it. Prepare thyself, Reader, for a series of the most surprising Dramatic Representations ever exhibited on any stage.

We hear tell of Dramatists, and scenic illusion how "natural," how illusive it was: if the spectator, for some half-moment, can half deceive himself into the belief that it was real, he departs doubly content. With all which, and much more of the like, I have no quarrel. But what must be thought of the Female Dramatist who, for eighteen long months, can exhibit the beautifulest Fata-morgana to a plush Cardinal, wide awake, with fifty years on his head; and so lap him in her scenic illusion that he never doubts but it is all firm earth, and the pasteboard Coulisse-trees are producing Hesperides apples? Could Madame de Lamotte, then, have written a *Hamlet?* I conjecture, not. More goes to the writing of a *Hamlet* than completest "imitation" of all characters and things in this Earth; there goes, before and beyond all, the rarest *understanding* of these, insight into their hidden essences and harmonies. Erasmus's Ape, as is known in Literary History, sat by while its Master was shaving, and "imitated" every point of the process; but its own foolish beard grew never the smoother.

As in looking at a finished Drama, it were nowise meet that the spectator first of all got behind the scenes, and saw the burnt-corks, brayed-resin, thunder-barrels, and withered hunger-bitten men and women, of which such heroic work was made: so here with the reader. A peep into the side-scenes shall be granted him, from time to time. But, on the whole, repress, O reader, that too insatiable scientific curiosity of thine; let thy *æsthetic* feeling first have play; and witness what a Prospero's-grotto poor Eminence Rohan is led into, to be pleased he knows not why.

Survey first what we might call the stage-lights, orchestra, general structure of the theatre, mood and condition of the audience. The theatre is the World, with its restless business and madness; near at hand rise the royal Domes of Versailles, mystery around them, and as background the memory of a thousand years. By the side of the River Seine walks, haggard, wasted, a Joaillier-Bijoutier de la Reine. with Necklace in his pocket. The audience is a drunk Christopher Sly in the fittest humor. A fixed-idea, driving him headlong over steep places, like that of the Gadarenes' Swine, has produced a deceptibility, as of desperation, that will clutch at straws. Understand one other word: Cagliostro is prophesying to him! The Quack of Quacks has now for years had him in leading. Transmitting "predictions in cipher;" questioning, before Hieroglyphic Screens, Columbs in a state of innocence, for elixirs of life, and philosopher's stone; unveiling, in fuliginous clear-obscure, an imaginary majesty of Nature; he isolates him more and more from all unpossessed men. Was it not enough that poor Rohan had become a dissolute, somnolent-violent, ever-vapory Mud-volcano; but black Egyptian magic must be laid on him!

If perhaps, too, our Countess de Lamotte, with her blandishments — ? For though not beautiful, she "has a certain piquancy" *et cetera!* — Enough, his poor Eminence sits in the fittest place, in the fittest mood: a newly awakened Christopher Sly; and with his "small ale" too beside him. Touch, only, the lights with fire-tipt rod; and let the orchestra, soft-warbling, strike up their fara-lara fiddle-diddle-dee!

CHAPTER VII.

MARIE-ANTOINETTE.

Such a soft-warbling fara-lara was it to his Eminence, when, in early January of the year 1784, our Countess first, mysteriously, and under seal of sworn secrecy, hinted to him that, with her winning tongue and great talent as Anecdotic Historian, she had worked a passage to the ear of Queen's Majesty itself.[1] Gods! dost *thou* bring with thee airs from Heaven? Is thy face yet radiant with some reflex of that Brightness beyond bright? — Men with fixed-idea are not as other men. To listen to a plain varnished tale, such as your Dramatist can fashion; to ponder the words; to snuff them up, as Ephraim did the east-wind, and grow flatulent and drunk with them: what else could poor Eminence do? His poor somnolent, so swift-rocked soul feels a new element infused into it; turbid resinous light, wide-coruscating, glares over the waste of his imagination. Is he interested in the mysterious tidings? Hope has seized them; there is in the world nothing else that interests him.

The secret friendship of Queens is not a thing to be let sleep: ever new Palace Interviews occur; — yet in deepest privacy; for how should her Majesty awaken so many tongues of Principalities and Nobilities, male and female, that spitefully watch her? Above all, however, "on the 2d of February," that day of "the Procession of blue Ribbons,"[2] much was spoken of: somewhat, too, of Monseigneur de Rohan! — Poor Monseigneur, hadst thou *three* long ears, thou 'dst hear her.

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[1] Compare Rohan's *Mémoires pour* (there are four of them), in the *Affaire du Collier*, with Lamotte's four. They go on in the way of controversy, of argument and response.

[2] Lamotte's *Mémoires Justificatifs* (London. 1788).

But will she not, perhaps, in some future priceless Interview, speak a good word for thee? Thyself shalt speak it, happy Eminence; at least, write it: our tutelary Countess will be the bearer! — On the 21st of March goes off that long exculpatory imploratory Letter: it is the first Letter that went off from Cardinal to Queen; to be followed, in time, by "above two hundred others;" which are graciously answered by verbal Messages, nay at length by Royal Autographs on gilt paper, — the whole delivered by our tutelary Countess.[1] The tutelary Countess comes and goes, fetching and carrying; with the gravity of a Roman Augur, inspects those extraordinary chicken-bowels, and draws prognostics from them. Things are in fair train; the Dauphiness took some offence at Monseigneur, but the Queen has nigh forgotten it. No inexorable Queen; ah no! So good, so free, light-hearted; only sore beset with malicious Polignacs and others; — at times, also, short of money.

Marie-Antoinette, as the reader well knows, has been much blamed for want of Etiquette. Even now, when the other accusations against her have sunk down to oblivion and the Father of Lies, this of wanting Etiquette survives her; — in the Castle of Ham, at this hour,[2] M. de Polignac and Company may be wringing their hands, not without an oblique glance at *her* for bringing them thither. She indeed discarded Etiquette; once, when her carriage broke down, she even entered a hackney coach. She would walk, too, at Trianon, in mere straw-hat, and perhaps muslin gown! Hence, the Knot of Etiquette being loosed, the Frame of Society broke up; and those astonishing "Horrors of the French Revolution" supervened. On what Damocles' hairs must the judgment-sword hang over this distracted Earth!

Thus, however, it was that Tenterden Steeple brought an influx of the Atlantic on us, and so Goodwin Sands. Thus, too, might it be that because Father Noah took the liberty of, say, rinsing out his wine-vat, his Ark was floated off, and a world drowned. — Beautiful Highborn that wert so foully hurled low! For, if thy Being came to thee out of old Hapsburg Dynasties, came it not also (like my own) out of Heaven? *Sunt lachrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.* Oh, is there a man's heart that thinks, without pity, of those long months and years of slow-wasting ignominy; — of thy Birth, soft-cradled in Imperial Schönbrunn, the winds of heaven not to visit thy face too roughly, thy foot to light on softness, thy eye on splendor; and then of thy Death, or hundred Deaths, to which the Guillotine and Fouquier Tinville's judgment-bar was but the merciful end? Look *there*, O man born of woman! The bloom of that fair face is wasted, the hair is gray with care; the brightness of those eyes is quenched, their lids hang drooping, the face is stony pale as of one living in death. Mean weeds, which her own hand has mended,[1] attire the Queen of the World. The death-hurdle, where thou sittest pale motionless, which only curses environ, has to stop: a people, drunk with vengeance, will drink it again in full draught, looking at thee there. Far as the eye reaches, a multitudinous sea of maniac heads; the air deaf with their triumph-yell! The Living-dead must shudder with yet one other pang; her startled blood yet again suffuses with the hue of agony that pale face, which she hides with her hands. There is, then, *no* heart to say, God pity thee? Oh, think not of these; think of HIM whom thou worshippest, the Crucified, — who also treading the wine-press *alone*, fronted sorrow still deeper; and triumphed over it, and made it holy; and built of it a "Sanctuary of Sorrow," for thee and all the wretched! Thy path of thorns is nigh ended. One long last look at the Tuileries, where thy step was once so light, — where thy children shall not dwell. The head is on the block; the axe rushes — Dumb lies the World; that wild-yelling World, and all its madness, is behind thee.

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[1] See Georgel: see Lamotte's *Mémoires;* in her Appendix of "Documents" to that volume certain of these Letters are given.

[2] A.D. 1833.

Beautiful Highborn that wert so foully hurled low! Rest yet in thy innocent gracefully heedless seclusion, unintruded on by *me*, while rude hands have not yet desecrated it. Be the curtains, that shroud in (if for the last time on this Earth) a Royal Life, still sacred to me. *Thy* fault, in the French Revolution, was that thou wert the Symbol of the Sin and Misery of a thousand years; that with Saint-Bartholomews and Jacqueries, with Gabelles and Dragonnades and Parcs-aux-cerfs, the heart of mankind was filled full, — and foamed over, into all-involving madness. To no Napoleon, to no Cromwell wert thou wedded: such sit not in the highest rank, of themselves; are raised on high by the shaking and confounding of all the ranks! As poor peasants, how happy, worthy had ye two been! But by evil destiny ye were made a King and Queen of; and so both once more — are become an astonishment and a by-word to all times.

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[1] Weber, *Mémoires concernant Marie-Antoinette* (London, 1809), tome iii., notes, p. 106.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TWO FIXED-IDEAS WILL UNITE.

"COUNTESS DE LAMOTTE, then, had penetrated into the confidence of the Queen? Those gilt-paper Autographs were actually written by the Queen?" Reader, forget not to repress that too insatiable scientific curiosity of thine! What I know is, that a certain Villette-de-Rétaux, with military whiskers, denizen of Rascaldom, comrade there of Monsieur le Comte, is skilful in imitating hands. Certain it is also, that Madame la Comtesse has penetrated to the Trianon — Doorkeeper's. Nay, as Campan herself must admit, she has met, "at a Man midwife's in Versailles," with worthy Queen's-valet Lesclaux, — or Desclos, for there is no uniformity in it. With these, or the like of these, she in the back-parlor of the Palace itself (if late enough), may pick a merrythought, sip the foam from a glass of Champagne. No farther seek her honors to disclose, for the present; or anatomically dissect, as we said, those extraordinary chicken-bowels, from which *she*, and she alone, can read Decrees of Fate, and also realize them.

Sceptic, seest thou his Eminence waiting there, in the moonlight, hovering to and fro on the back terrace, till she come out — from the ineffable Interview?[1] He is close muffled; walks restlessly observant; shy also, and courting the shade. She comes: up closer with thy capote, O Eminence, down with thy broadbrim; for she has an escort! 'T is but the good Monsieur Queen's-valet Lesclaux: and now he is sent back again, as no longer needful. Mark him, Monseigneur, nevertheless; thou wilt see him yet another time. Monseigneur marks little: his heart is in the ineffable Interview, in the gilt-paper Autograph alone. — Queen's-valet Lesclaux? Methinks, he has much the stature of Villette, denizen of Rascaldom! Impossible!

How our Countess managed with Cagliostro? Cagliostro, gone from Strasburg, is as yet far distant, winging his way through dim Space; will not be here for months: only his "predictions in cipher" are here. Here or there, however, Cagliostro, to our Countess, can be useful. At a glance, the eye of genius has descried him to be a bottomless slough of falsity, vanity, gulosity and thick-eyed stupidity: of foulest material, but of fattest; — fit compost for the Plant she is rearing. Him who has deceived all Europe she can undertake to deceive. His Columbs, demonic Masonries, Egyptian Elixirs, what is all this to the light-giggling exclusively practical Lamotte? It runs off from her, as all speculation, good, bad and indifferent, has always done, "like water from one in wax-cloth dress." With the lips meanwhile she can honor it; Oil of Flattery, the best patent anti-friction known, subdues all irregularities whatsoever.

On Cagliostro, again, on his side, a certain uneasy feeling might, for moments, intrude itself; the raven loves not ravens. But what can he do? Nay, she is partly playing *his* game: can he not spill her full cup yet, at the right season, and pack her out of doors? Oftenest, in their joyous orgies, this light fascinating Countess, — who perhaps has a design on *his* heart, seems to him but one other of those light *Papiliones*, who have fluttered round him in all climates; whom with grim muzzle he has snapt by the thousand.

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[1] See Georgel.

Thus, what with light fascinating Countess, what with Quack of Quacks, poor Eminence de Rohan lies safe; his mud-volcano placidly simmering in thick Egyptian haze: withdrawn from all the world. Moving figures, as of men, he sees; takes not the trouble to look at. Court-cousins rally him; are answered in silence; or, if it go too far, in mud-explosions terrifico-absurd. Court-cousins and all mankind are unreal shadows merely; Queen's favor the only substance.

Nevertheless, the World, on its side too, has an existence; lies not idle in these days. It has got its Versailles Treaty signed, long months ago; and the plenipotentiaries all home again, for votes of thanks. Paris, London and other great Cities and small, are working, intriguing; dying, being born. There, in the Rue Taranne, for instance, the once noisy Denis Diderot has fallen silent enough. Here also, in Bolt Court, old Samuel Johnson, like an over-wearied Giant, must lie down, and slumber without dream; — the rattling of carriages and wains, and all the world's din and business rolling by, as ever, from of old. — Sieur Boehmer, however, has not yet drowned himself in the Seine; only walks haggard, wasted, purposing to do it.

News (by the merest accident in the world) reach Sieur Boehmer of Madame's new favor with her Majesty! Men will do much before they drown. Sieur Boehmer's Necklace is on Madame's table, his guttural-nasal rhetoric in her ear: he will abate many a pound and penny of the first just price; he will give cheerfully a Thousand Louis-d'or, as *cadeau*, to the generous Scion-of-Royalty that shall persuade her Majesty. The man's importunities grow quite annoying to our Countess; who, in her glib way, satirically prattles how she has been bored, — to Monseigneur, among others.

Dozing on down cushions, far inwards, with soft ministering Hebes, and luxurious appliances; with ranked Heyducs, and a *Valetaille* innumerable, that shut out the prose-world and its discord: thus lies Monseigneur, in enchanted dream. Can he, even in sleep, forget his tutelary Countess, and her service? By the delicatest presents he alleviates her distresses, most undeserved. Nay, once or twice, gilt Autographs, from a Queen, — with whom he is evidently rising to unknown heights in favor, — have done Monseigneur the honor to make him *her* Majesty's Grand Almoner, when the case was pressing. Monseigneur, we say, has had the honor to disburse charitable cash, on her Majesty's behalf, to this or the other distressed deserving object: say only to the length of a few thousand pounds, advanced from his own funds; — her Majesty being at the moment so poor, and charity a thing that will not wait. Always Madame, good, foolish, gadding creature, takes charge of delivering the money. — Madame can descend from her attics, in the *Belle Image;* and feel the smiles of Nature and Fortune, a little; so bounteous has the Queen's Majesty been.[1]

To Monseigneur the power of money over highest female hearts had never been incredible. Presents have, many times, worked wonders. But then, O Heavens, *what* present? Scarcely were the Cloud-Compeller himself, all coined into new Louis-d'or, worthy to alight in such a lap. Loans, charitable disbursements, however, as we see, are permissible; these, by defect of payment, may become presents. In the vortex of his Eminence's day-dreams, lumbering multiform slowly round, this of importunate Boehmer and his Necklace, from time to time, turns up. Is the Queen's Majesty at heart desirous of it; but again, at the moment, too poor? Our tutelary Countess answers vaguely, mysteriously; — confesses, at last, under oath of secrecy, her own private suspicion that the Queen wants this same Necklace, of all things; but dare not, for a stingy husband, buy it. She, the Countess de Lamotte, will look farther into the matter; and, if aught serviceable to his Eminence can be suggested, will in a good way suggest it, in the proper quarter.

Walk warily, Countess de Lamotte; for now, with thickening breath, thou approachest the moment of moments! Principalities and Powers, *Parlement*, *Grand Chambre* and

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[1] Georgel; Rohan's four *Mémoires pour;* Lamotte's four.

Tournelle, with all their whips and gibbet-wheels; the very Crack of Doom hangs over thee, if thou trip. Forward, with nerve of iron, on shoes of felt; *like* a Treasure-digger, in silence, looking neither to the right nor left, — where yawn abysses deep as the Pool, and all Pandemonium hovers, eager to rend thee into rags!

CHAPTER IX.

PARK OF VERSAILLES.

Or will the reader incline rather, taking the other and sunny side of the matter, to enter that Lamottic-Circean theatrical establishment of Monseigneur de Rohan; and see there how, under the best of Dramaturgists, Melodrama with sweeping pall flits past him; while the enchanted Diamond fruit is gradually ripening, to fall by a shake?

The 28th of July, of this same momentous 1784, has come; and with it the most rapturous tumult into the heart of Monseigneur. Ineffable expectancy stirs up his whole soul, with the much that lies therein, from its lowest foundations: borne on wild seas to Armida Islands, yet as is fit, through Horror dim-hovering round, he tumultuously rocks. To the Château, to the Park! This night the Queen will meet thee, the Queen herself: so far has our tutelary Countess brought it. What can ministerial impediments, Polignac intrigues, avail against the favor, nay — Heaven and Earth! — perhaps the tenderness of a Queen? She vanishes from amid their meshwork of Etiquette and Cabal; descends from her celestial Zodiac, to thee a shepherd of Latmos. Alas, a white-bearded pursy shepherd, fat and scant of breath! Who can account for the taste of females? But thou, burnish up thy whole faculties of gallantry, thy fifty years' experience of the sex; this night, or never! — In such unutterable meditations does Monseigneur restlessly spend the day; and long for darkness, yet dread it.

Darkness has at length come. The perpendicular rows of Heyducs, in that Palais or Hôtel de Strasbourg, are all cast horizontal, prostrate in sleep; the very Concierge resupine, with open mouth, audibly drinks in nepenthe; when Monseigneur, "in blue great-coat, with slouched hat," issues softly, with his henchman Planta of the Grisons, to the Park of Versailles. Planta must loiter invisible in the distance; Slouched-hat will wait here, among the leafy thickets; till our tutelary Countess, "in black domino," announce the moment, which surely must be near.

The night is of the darkest for the season; no Moon; warm, slumbering July, in motionless clouds, drops fatness over the Earth. The very stars from the Zenith see not Monseigneur; see only his and the world's cloud-covering, fringed with twilight in the far North. Midnight, telling itself forth from these shadowy Palace Domes? All the steeples of Versailles, the villages around, with metal tongue, and huge Paris itself dull-droning, answer drowsily, Yes! Sleep rules this Hemisphere of the World. From Arctic to Antarctic, the Life of our Earth lies all, in long swaths, or rows (like those rows of Heyducs and snoring Concierge), successively mown down, from vertical to horizontal, by Sleep! Rather curious to consider.

The flowers are all asleep in Little Trianon, the roses folded in for the night; but the Rose of Roses still wakes. O wondrous Earth! O doubly wondrous Park of Versailles, with Little and Great Trianon, — and a scarce-breathing Monseigneur! Ye Hydraulics of Lenôtre, that also slumber, with stop-cocks, in your deep leaden chambers, babble not of *him*, when ye arise. Ye odorous balm-shrubs, huge spectral Cedars, thou sacred Boscage of Hornbeam, ye dim Pavilions of the Peerless, whisper not! Moon, lie silent, hidden in thy vacant cave; no star look down: let neither Heaven nor Hell peep through the blanket of the Night, to cry, Hold, Hold! — The Black Domino? Ha! Yes! — With stouter step than might have been expected, Monseigneur is under way; the Black Domino had only to whisper, low and eager: "In the Hornbeam Arbor!" And now, Cardinal, oh now! — Yes, there hovers the white Celestial; "in white robe of *linon moucheté*," finer than moonshine; a Juno by her bearing: there, in that bosket! Monseigneur, down on thy knees; never can red breeches be better wasted. Oh, he would kiss the royal shoe-tie, or its shadow if there were one: not words; only broken gaspings, murmuring prostrations, eloquently speak his meaning. But, ah, behold! Our tutelary Black Domino, in haste, with vehement whisper: "*On vient.*" The white Juno drops a fairest Rose, with these ever-memorable words, "*Vous savez ce que cela veut dire,* You know what that means;" vanishes in the thickets, the Black Domino hurrying her with eager whisper of "*Vite, vite,* Away, away!" for the sound of footsteps (doubtless from Madame and Madame d'Artois, unwelcome sisters that they are!) is approaching fast. Monseigneur picks up his Rose; runs as for the King's plate, almost overturns poor Planta, whose laugh assures him that all is safe.[1]

O Ixion de Rohan, happiest mortal of this world, since the first Ixion, of deathless memory, — who nevertheless, in that cloud-embrace, begat strange Centaurs! Thou art Prime Minister of France without peradventure: is not this the Rose of Royalty, worthy to become ottar of roses, and yield perfume forever? How *thou*, of all people, wilt contrive to govern France, in these very peculiar times — But that is little to the matter. There, doubtless, is thy Rose (which, methinks, it were well to have a Box or Casket made for): nay, was there not in the dulcet of thy Juno's "*Vous savez*" a kind of trepidation, a quaver, — as of still deeper meanings!

Reader, there is hitherto no item of this miracle that is not historically proved and *true*. — In distracted black-magical phantasmagory, adumbrations of yet higher and highest Dalliances[2] hover stupendous in the background: whereof your

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[1] Compare Georgel, Lamotte's *Mémoires Justificatifs*, and the *Mémoires pour* of the various parties, especially Gay d'Oliva's. Georgel places the scene in the year 1785; quite wrong. Lamotte's "royal Autographs" (as given in the Appendix to *Mémoires Justificatifs*) seem to be misdated as to the day of the month. There is endless confusion of dates.

[2] Lamotte's *Mémoires Justificatifs*; MS. Songs in the *Affaire du Collier*, &c. &c. Nothing can exceed the brutality of these things (unfit for Print or

Georgels, and Campans, and other official characters *can* take no notice! There, in distracted black-magical phantasmagory, let these hover. The truth of them for us is that they do so hover. The truth of them in itself is known only to three persons: Dame self-styled Countess de Lamotte; the Devil; and Philippe Égalité, — who furnished money and facts for the Lamotte *Memoirs*, and, before guillotinement, begat the present King of the French.

Enough that Ixion de Rohan, lapsed almost into deliquium, by such sober certainty of waking bliss, is the happiest of all men; and his tutelary Countess the dearest of all women, save one only. On the 25th of August (so strong still are those villanous Drawing-room cabals) he goes, weeping, but submissive, by order of a gilt Autograph, home to Saverne; till farther dignities can be matured for him. He carries his Rose, now considerably faded, in a Casket of fit price; may, if he so please, perpetuate it as *pot-pourri*. He names a favorite walk in his Archiepiscopal pleasure-grounds, *Promenade de la Rose;* there let him court digestion, and loyally somnambulate till called for.

I notice it as a coincidence in chronology, that, few days after this date, the Demoiselle (or even, for the last month, Baroness) Gay d'Oliva began to find Countess de Lamotte "not at home," in her fine Paris hotel, in her fine Charonne country-house; and went no more, with Villette, and such pleasant dinner-guests, and her, to see Beaumarchais's *Mariage de Figaro*[1] running its hundred nights.

Pen); which nevertheless found believers, — increase of believers, in the public exasperation; and did the Queen, say all her historians, incalculable damage.

[1] Gay d'Oliva's First *Mémoire pour*, p. 37.

CHAPTER X.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

"The Queen?" Good reader, *thou* surely art not a Partridge the Schoolmaster, or a Monseigneur de Rohan, to mistake the stage for a Reality! — "But who this Demoiselle d'Oliva was?" Reader, let us remark rather how the labors of our Dramaturgic Countess are increasing.

New actors I see on the scene; not one of whom shall guess what the other is doing; or, indeed, know rightly what himself is doing. For example, cannot Messieurs de Lamotte and Villette, of Rascaldom, like Nisus and Euryalus, take a midnight walk of contemplation, with "footsteps of Madame and Madame d'Artois" (since all footsteps are much the same), without offence to any one? A Queen's Similitude can believe that a Queen's Self, for frolic's sake, is looking at her through the thickets;[1] a terrestrial Cardinal can kiss with devotion a celestial Queen's slipper, or Queen's Similitude's slipper, — and no one but a Black Domino the wiser. All these shall follow each his precalculated course; for their inward mechanism is known, and fit wires hook themselves on this. To Two only is a clear belief vouchsafed: to Monseigneur, a clear belief founded on stupidity; to the great creative Dramaturgist, sitting at the heart of the whole mystery, a clear belief founded on completest insight. Great creative Dramaturgist! How, like Schiller, "by union of the Possible with the Necessarily-existing, she brings out the" — Eighty thousand Pounds! Don Aranda, with his triple-sealed missives and hoodwinked secretaries, bragged justly that he cut down the Jesuits in one day; but here, without ministerial salary, or King's favor, or any help beyond her own black domino, labors a greater than he. How she advances, stealthily, steadfastly, with Argus eye and ever-ready brain; with nerve of iron, on shoes of felt! O worthy to have intrigued for Jesuitdom, for Pope's Tiara; — to have been Pope Joan thyself, in those old days; and as Arachne of Arachnes, sat in the centre of that stupendous spider-web, which, reaching from Goa to Acapulco, and from Heaven to Hell, overnetted the thoughts and souls of men! — Of which spider-web stray tatters, in favorable dewy mornings, even yet become visible.

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[1] See Lamotte; see Gay d'Oliva.

The Demoiselle d'Oliva? She is a Parisian Demoiselle of three-and-twenty, tall, blond and beautiful;[1] from unjust guardians, and an evil world, she has had somewhat to suffer.

"In this month of June, 1784," says the Demoiselle herself, in her (judicial) Autobiography, "I occupied a small apartment in the Rue du Jour, Quartier St. Eustache. I was not far from the Garden of the Palais-Royal; I had made it my usual promenade." For, indeed, the real God's-truth is, I was a Parisian unfortunate female, with moderate custom; and one must go where his market lies. "I frequently passed three or four hours of the afternoon there, with some women of my acquaintance, and a little child of four years old, whom I was fond of, whom his parents willingly trusted with me. I even went thither alone, except for him, when other company failed.

"One afternoon, in the month of July following, I was at the Palais-Royal: my whole company, at the moment, was the child I speak of. A tall young man, walking alone, passes several times before me. He was a man I had never seen. He looks at me; he looks fixedly at me. I observe even that always. as he comes near, he slackens his pace, as if to survey me more at leisure. A chair stood vacant; two or three feet from mine. He seats himself there.

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[1] I was then presented "to two Ladies, one of whom was remarkable for the richness of her shape: she had blue eyes and chestnut hair" (Bette d'Etienville's Second *Mémoire pour;* in the *Suite de l'Affaire du Collier*). This is she whom Bette, and Bette's Advocate, intended the world to take for Gay d'Oliva. "The other is of middle size: dark eyes, chestnut hair, white complexion: the sound of her voice is agreeable; she speaks perfectly well, and with no less faculty than vivacity:" this one is meant for Lamotte. Oliva's real name was Essigny; the *Oliva* (OLISVA, anagram of VALOIS) was given her by Lamotte along with the title of *Baroness* (MS. Note, *Affaire du Collier*).

"Till this instant, the sight of the young man, his walks, his approaches, his repeated gazings, had made no impression on me. But now when he was sitting so close by, I could not avoid noticing him. His eyes ceased not to wander over all my person. His air becomes earnest, grave. An unquiet curiosity appears to agitate him. He seems to measure my figure, to seize by turns all parts of my physiognomy." — He finds me (but whispers not a syllable of it) tolerably like, both in person and profile; for even the Abbé Georgel says, I was a *belle courtisane.*

"It is time to name this young man: he was the Sieur de Lamotte, styling himself Comte de Lamotte." Who doubts it? He praises "my feeble charms;" expresses a wish to "pay his addresses to me." I, being a lone spinster, know not what to say; think it best in the mean while to retire. Vain precaution! "I see him all on a sudden appear in my apartment!"

On his "ninth visit" (for he was always civility itself), he talks of introducing a great Court-lady, by whose means I may even do her Majesty some little secret-service, — the reward of which will be unspeakable. In the dusk of the evening, silks mysteriously rustle: enter the creative Dramaturgist, Dame styled Countess de Lamotte; and so — the too intrusive scientific reader has now, for his punishment, *got* on the wrong side of that loveliest Transparency; finds nothing but grease-pots, and vapor of expiring wicks!

The Demoiselle Gay d'Oliva may once more sit, or stand, in the Palais-Royal, with such custom as will come. In due time, she shall again, but with breath of Terror, be blown upon; and blown out of France to Brussels.

CHAPTER XI.

THE NECKLACE IS SOLD.

Autumn, with its gray moaning winds and coating of red strewn leaves, invites Courtiers to enjoy the charms of Nature; and all business of moment stands still. Countess de Lamotte, while everything is so stagnant, and even Boehmer has locked up his Necklace and his hopes for the season, can drive, with her Count and Euryalus Villette, down to native Bar-sur-Aube; and there (in virtue of a Queen's bounty) show the envious a Scion-of-Royalty *re*grafted; and make them yellower looking on it. A well-varnished chariot, with the Arms of Valois duly painted in bend-sinister; a house gallantly furnished, bodies gallantly attired, — secure them the favorablest reception from all manner of men. The very Duc de Penthièvre (Égalité's father-in-law) welcomes our Lamotte, with that urbanity characteristic of his high station and the old school. Worth, indeed, makes the man, or woman; but "leather" of gig-straps, and "prunella" of gig-lining, first makes it *go*.

The great creative Dramaturgist has thus let down her drop-scene; and only, with a Letter or two to Saverne, or even a visit thither (for it is but a day's drive from Bar), keeps up a due modicum of intermediate instrumental music. She needs some pause, in good sooth, to collect herself a little; for the last act and grand Catastrophe is at hand. Two fixed-ideas, Cardinal's and Jeweller's, a negative and a positive, have felt each other; stimulated now by new hope, are rapidly revolving round each other, and approximating; like two flames, are stretching out long fire-tongues to join and be one.

Boehmer, on his side, is ready with the readiest; as indeed he has been these four long years. The Countess, it is true, will have neither part nor lot in that foolish *Cadeau* of his, or in the whole foolish Necklace business: this she has, in plain words, and even not without asperity, due to a bore of such magnitude, given him to know. From her nevertheless, by cunning inference, and the merest accident in the world, the sly Joaillier-Bijoutier has gleaned thus much, that Monseigneur de Rohan is the man. — Enough! Enough! Madame shall be no more troubled. Rest there, in hope, thou Necklace of the Devil; but, O Monseigneur, be thy return speedy!

Alas, the man lives not that would be speedier than Monseigneur, if he durst. But as yet no gilt Autograph invites him, permits him; the few gilt Autographs are all negatory, procrastinating. Cabals of Court; forever Cabals! Nay if it be not for some Necklace, or other such crotchet or necessity, who knows but he may *never* be recalled (so fickle is womankind); but forgotten, and left to rot here, like his Rose, into *pot-pourri?* Our tutelary Countess, too, is shyer in this matter than we ever saw her. Nevertheless, by intense skilful cross-questioning, he has extorted somewhat; sees partly how it stands. The Queen's Majesty will have her Necklace; for when, in such case, had not woman her way? The Queen's Majesty can even pay for it — by instalments; but then the stingy husband! Once for all, she will not be seen in the business. Now, therefore, Were it, or were it not, permissible to mortal to transact it secretly in her stead? That is the question. If to mortal, then to Monseigneur. Our Countess has even ventured to hint afar off at Monseigneur (kind Countess!) in the proper quarter; but his discretion in regard to money-matters is doubted. Discretion? And I on the *Promenade de la Rose?* — Explode not, O Eminence! Trust will spring of trial; thy hour is coming.

The Lamottes meanwhile have left their farewell card with all the respectable classes of Bar-sur-Aube; our Dramaturgist stands again behind the scenes at Paris. How is it, O Monseigneur, that she is still so shy with thee, in this matter of the Necklace; that she leaves the love-lorn Latmian shepherd to droop, here in lone Saverne, like weeping-ash, in naked winter, on his Promenade of the Rose, with vague commonplace responses that his hour is coming? — By Heaven and Earth! at last, in late January, it is *come*. Behold it, this new gilt Autograph: "To Paris, on a small business of delicacy, which our Countess will explain," — which I already know! To Paris! Horses; postilions; beef-eaters! — And so his resuscitated Eminence, all wrapt in furs, in the pleasantest frost (Abbé Georgel says, *un beau froid de Janvier*), over clear-jingling highways rolls rapidly, — borne on the bosom of Dreams.

O Dame de Lamotte, has the enchanted Diamond fruit ripened, then? Hast thou *given* it the little shake, big with unutterable fate? — I? can the Dame justly retort: Who saw me in it? — The reader, therefore, has still Three scenic Exhibitions to look at, by our great Dramaturgist; then the Fourth and last, — by another Author.

To us, reflecting how oftenest the true moving force in human things works hidden underground, it seems small marvel that this month of January, 1785, wherein our Countess so little courts the eye of the vulgar historian, should nevertheless have been the busiest of all for her; especially the latter half thereof.

Wisely eschewing matters of Business (which she could never in her life understand), our Countess will personally take no charge of that bargain-making; leaves it all to her Majesty and the gilt Autographs. Assiduous Boehmer nevertheless is in frequent close conference with Monseigneur: the Paris Palais de Strasbourg, shut to the rest of men, sees the Joaillier-Bijoutier, with eager official aspect, come and go. The grand difficulty is — must we say it? — her Majesty's wilful whimsicality, unacquaintance with Business. She positively will not write a gilt Autograph, *authorizing* his Eminence to make the bargain; but writes rather, in a pettish manner, that the thing is of no consequence, and can be given up! Thus must the poor Countess dash to and fro, like a weaver's shuttle, between Paris and Versailles; wear her horses and nerves to pieces; nay, sometimes in the hottest haste, wait many hours within call of the Palace, considering what *can* be done (with none but Villette to bear her company), —till the Queen's whim pass.

At length, after furious-driving and conferences enough, on the 29th of January a middle course is hit on. Cautious Boehmer shall write out, on finest paper, his terms; which are really rather fair: Sixteen hundred thousand livres; to be paid in five equal instalments; the first this day six months; the other four from three months to three months; this is what Court-Jewellers, Boehmer and Bassange, on the one part, and Prince Cardinal Commendator Louis de Rohan, on the other part, will stand to; witness their hands. Which written sheet of finest paper our poor Countess must again take charge of, again dash off with to Versailles; and therefrom, after trouble unspeakable (shared in only by the faithful Villette, of Rascaldom), return with it, bearing this most precious marginal note, "*Bon — Marie-Antoinette de France*," in the Autograph-hand! Happy Cardinal! this *thou* shalt keep in the innermost of all thy repositories. Boehmer meanwhile, secret as Death, shall tell no man that he has sold his Necklace; or if much pressed for an actual sight of the same, confess that it is sold to the Favorite Sultana of the Grand Turk for the time being.[1]

Thus, then, do the smoking Lamotte horses at length get rubbed down, and feel the taste of oats, after midnight; the Lamotte Countess can also gradually sink into needful slumber, perhaps not unbroken by dreams. On the morrow the bargain shall be concluded; next day the Necklace be delivered, on Monseigneur's receipt.

Will the reader, therefore, be pleased to glance at the following two Life-Pictures, Real-Phantasmagories, or whatever we may call them: they are the two first of those Three scenic real-poetic Exhibitions, brought about by our Dramaturgist: short Exhibitions, but essential ones.

[1] Campan.

CHAPTER XII.

THE NECKLACE VANISHES.

It is the first day of February; that grand day of Delivery. The Sieur Boehmer is in the Court of the Palais de Strasbourg; his look mysterious-official, and though much emaciated, radiant with enthusiasm. The Seine has missed him; though lean, he will fatten again, and live through new enterprises.

Singular, were we not used to it: the name "Boehmer," as it passes upwards and inwards, lowers all halberds of Heyducs in perpendicular rows: the historical eye beholds him, bowing low, with plenteous smiles, in the plush Saloon of Audience. Will it please Monseigneur, then, to do the *ne-plus-ultra* of Necklaces the honor of looking at it? A piece of Art, which the Universe cannot parallel, shall be parted with (Necessity compels Court-Jewellers) at that ruinously low sum. They, the Court-Jewellers, shall have much ado to weather it; but their work, at least, will find a fit Wearer, and go down to juster posterity. Monseigneur will merely have the condescension to sign this Receipt of Delivery: all the rest, her Highness the Sultana of the Sublime Porte has settled it.—Here the Court-Jeweller, with his joyous though now much emaciated face, ventures on a faint knowing smile; to which, in the lofty dissolute-serene of Monseigneur's, some twinkle of permission could not but respond.—This is the First of those Three real-poetic Exhibitions, brought about by our Dramaturgist,—with perfect success.

It was said, long afterwards, that Monseigneur should have known, and even that Boehmer should have known, her Highness the Sultana's marginal-note, her "*Right—Marie-Antoinette of France*," to be a forgery and mockery: the "*of France*" was fatal to it. Easy talking, easy criticising! But how are two enchanted men to know; two men with a fixed-idea each, a negative and a positive, rushing together to neutralize each other in rapture? — Enough, Monseigneur has the *ne-plus-ultra* of Necklaces, conquered by man's valor and woman's wit; and rolls off with it, in mysterious speed, to Versailles, — triumphant as a Jason with his Golden Fleece.

The Second grand scenic Exhibition by our Dramaturgic Countess occurs in her own apartment at Versailles, so early as the following night. It is a commodious apartment, with alcove; and the alcove has a glass door.[1] Monseigneur enters, — with a follower bearing a mysterious Casket, who carefully deposits it, and then respectfully withdraws. It is the Necklace itself in all its glory! Our tutelary Countess, and Monseigneur, and we, can at leisure admire the queenly Talisman; congratulate ourselves that the painful conquest of it is achieved.

But, hist! A knock, mild but decisive, as from one knocking with authority! Monseigneur and we retire to our alcove; there, from behind our glass screen, observe what passes. Who comes? The door flung open: *de par la Reine!* Behold him, Monseigneur: he enters with grave, respectful, yet official air; worthy Monsieur Queen's-valet Lesclaux, the same who escorted our tutelary Countess, that moonlight night, from the back apartments of Versailles. Said we not, thou wouldst see *him* once more? — Methinks, again, spite of his Queen's-uniform, he has much the features of Villette of Rascaldom! — Rascaldom or Valetdom (for to the blind all colors are the same), he has, with his grave, respectful, yet official air, received the Casket, and its priceless contents; with fit injunction, with fit engagements; and retires bowing low.

Thus softly, silently, like a very Dream, flits away our solid Necklace — through the Horn Gate of Dreams!

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[1] Georgel, &c.

CHAPTER XIII.

SCENE THIRD: BY DAME DE LAMOTTE.

Now too, in these same days (as he can afterwards prove by affidavit of Landlords) arrives Count Cagliostro himself, from Lyons! No longer by predictions in cipher; but by his living voice, often in rapt communion with the unseen world, "with Caraffe and four candles;" by his greasy prophetic bulldog face, said to be the "most perfect quack-face of the eighteenth century," can we assure ourselves that all is well; that all will turn "to the glory of Monseigneur, to the good of France, and of mankind,"[1] and of Egyptian masonry. "Tokay flows like water;" our charming Countess, with her piquancy of face, is sprightlier than ever; enlivens with the brightest sallies, with the adroitest flatteries to all, those suppers of the gods. O Nights, O Suppers — too good to last! Nay, now also occurs another and Third scenic Exhibition, fitted by its radiance to dispel from Monseigneur's soul the last trace of care.

Why the Queen does not, even yet, openly receive me at Court? Patience, Monseigneur! Thou little knowest those too intricate cabals; and how she still but works at them silently, with royal suppressed fury, like a royal lioness only *delivering* herself from the hunter's toils. Meanwhile, is not thy work done? The Necklace, she rejoices over it; beholds, many times in secret, her Juno-neck mirrored back the lovelier for it, — as our tutelar Countess can testify. Come to-morrow to the *Œil-de-Bœuf;* there see with eyes, in high noon, as already in deep midnight thou hast seen, whether in *her* royal heart there were delay.

Let us stand, then, with Monseigneur, in that *Œil-de-Bœuf*, in the Versailles Palace Gallery; for all well-dressed persons are admitted: there the Loveliest, in pomp of royalty, will walk to mass. The world is all in pelisses and winter furs; cheerful, clear, — with noses tending to blue. A lively many-voiced hum plays fitful, hither and thither: of sledge parties and Court parties; frosty state of the weather; stability of M. de Calonne; Majesty's looks yesterday; — such hum as always, in these sacred Court-spaces, since Louis le Grand made and consecrated them, has, with more or less impetuosity, agitated our common Atmosphere.

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[1] Georgel, &c.

Ah, through that long high Gallery what Figures have passed — and vanished! Louvois, — with the Great King, flashing fire-glances on the fugitive; in his red right hand a pair of tongs, which pious Maintenon hardly holds back: Louvois, where art thou? Ye *Maréchaux de France?* Ye unmentionable women of past generations? Here also was it that rolled and rushed the "sound, absolutely like thunder,"[1] of Courtier hosts; in that dark hour when the signal-light in Louis the Fifteenth's chamber-window was blown out; and his ghastly infectious Corpse lay lone, forsaken on its tumbled death-lair, "in the hands of some poor women;" and the Courtier hosts rushed from the Deep-fallen to hail the New-risen! These too rushed, and passed; and their "sound, absolutely like thunder," became silence. Figures? Men? They are fast-fleeting Shadows; fast chasing each other: it is not a Palace, but a Caravansera. — Monseigneur (with thy too much Tokay overnight)! cease puzzling: here *thou* art, this blessed February day: — the Peerless, will she turn lightly that high head of hers, and glance aside into the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, in passing? Please Heaven, she will. To our tutelary Countess, at least, she promised it;[2] though, alas, so fickle is womankind! —

Hark! Clang of opening doors! She issues, like the Moon in silver brightness, down the Eastern steeps. *La Reine vient!* What a figure! I (with the aid of glasses) discern *her*. O Fairest, Peerless! Let the hum of minor discoursing hush itself wholly; and only one successive rolling peal of *Vive la Reine*, like the movable radiance of a train of fire-works, irradiate her path. — Ye Immortals! She does, she beckons, turns her head this way! — "Does she not?" says Countess de Lamotte. — Versailles, the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, and all men and things are drowned in a Sea of Light; Monseigneur and that high beckoning Head are alone, with each other in the Universe.

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[1] Campan.

[2] See Georgel.

O Eminence, what a beatific vision! Enjoy it, blest as the gods; ruminate and re-enjoy it, with full soul: it is the last provided for thee. Too soon, in the course of these six months, shall thy beatific vision, like Mirza's vision, gradually melt away; and only oxen and sheep be grazing in its place; — and thou, as a doomed Nebuchadnezzar, be grazing with them.

"Does she not?" said the Countess de Lamotte. That it is a habit of hers; that hardly a day passes *without* her doing it: this the Countess de Lamotte did not say.

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CHAPTER XIV.

THE NECKLACE CANNOT BE PAID.

HERE, then, the specially Dramaturgic labors of Countess de Lamotte may be said to terminate. The rest of her life is Histrionic merely, or Histrionic and Critical; as, indeed, what had all the former part of it been but a *Hypocrisis*, a more or less correct Playing off Parts? O "Mrs. Facing-both-ways" (as old Bunyan said), what a talent hadst thou! No Proteus ever took so many shapes, no Chameleon so often changed color. One thing thou wert to Monseigneur; another thing to Cagliostro, and Villette of Rascaldom; a third thing to the World, in printed *Mémoires;* a fourth thing to Philippe Égalité: all things to all men!

Let her, however, we say, but manage now to *act* her own parts, with proper Histrionic illusion; and, by Critical glosses, give her past Dramaturgy the fit aspect, to Monseigneur and others: this henceforth, and not new Dramaturgy, includes her whole task. Dramatic Scenes, in plenty, will follow of themselves; especially that Fourth and final Scene, spoken of above as by another Author, — by Destiny itself.

For in the Lamotte Theatre, so different from our common Pasteboard one, the Play goes on, even when the Machinist has left it. Strange enough: those Air-images, which from her Magic-lantern she hung out on the empty bosom of Night, have clutched hold of this solid-seeming World (which some call the Material World, as if that made it more a Real one), and will tumble hither and thither the solidest masses there. Yes, reader, so goes it here below. What thou callest a Brain-web, or mere illusive Nothing, *is* it not a web of the Brain; of the Spirit which inhabits the Brain; and which, in this World (rather, as I think, to be named the Spiritual one), very naturally moves and tumbles hither and thither all things it meets with, in Heaven or in Earth? — So too, the Necklace, though we saw it vanish through the Horn Gate of Dreams, and in my opinion man shall never more behold it, — yet its activity ceases not, nor will. For no Act of a man, no Thing (how much less the man himself!) is extinguished when *it* disappears: through considerable times it still visibly works, though done and vanished; I have known a done thing work visibly Three Thousand Years and more: invisibly, unrecognized, all done things work through endless times and years. Such a Hypermagical is this our poor old Real world; which some take upon them to pronounce effete, prosaic! Friend, it is thyself that art all withered up into effete Prose, dead as ashes: know this (I advise thee); and seek passionately, with a passion little short of desperation, to have it remedied.

Meanwhile, what will the feeling heart think to learn that Monseigneur de Rohan, as we prophesied, again experiences the fickleness of a Court; that, notwithstanding beatific visions at noon and midnight, the Queen's Majesty, with the light ingratitude of her sex, flies off at a tangent; and, far from ousting his detested and detesting rival, Minister Breteuil, and openly delighting to honor Monseigneur, will hardly vouchsafe him a few gilt Autographs, and those few of the most capricious, suspicious, soul-confusing tenor? What terrifico-absurd explosions, which scarcely Cagliostro, with Caraffe and four candles, can still; how many deep-weighed Humble Petitions, Explanations, Expostulations, penned with fervidest eloquence, with craftiest diplomacy, — all delivered by our tutelar Countess: in vain! — O Cardinal, with what a huge iron mace, like Guy of Warwick's, thou smitest Phantasms in two, which close again, take shape again; and only thrashest the air!

One comfort, however, is that the Queen's Majesty has committed herself. The Rose of Trianon, and what may pertain thereto, lies it not here? That "*Right — Marie-Antoinette of France*," too; and the 30th of July, first-instalment day, coming? She shall be *brought* to terms, good Eminence! Order horses and beef-eaters for Saverne; there, ceasing all written or oral communication, starve her into capitulating.[1] It is the bright May month: his Eminence again somnambulates the *Promenade de la Rose;* but now with grim dry eyes; and, from time to time, terrifically stamping.

But who is this that I see mounted on costliest horse and horse-gear; betting at Newmarket Races; though he can speak no English word, and only some Chevalier O'Niel, some Capuchin Macdermot, from Bar-sur-Aube, interprets his French into the dialect of the Sister Island? Few days ago I observed him walking in Fleet Street, thoughtfully through Temple-Bar; — in deep treaty with Jeweller Jeffreys, with Jeweller Grey,[2] for the sale of Diamonds: such a lot as one may boast of. A tall handsome man; with ex-military whiskers; with a look of troubled gayety and rascalism: you think it is the Sieur self-styled Count de Lamotte; nay the man himself confesses it! The Diamonds were a present to his Countess, — from the still-bountiful Queen.

Villette too, has he completed his sales at Amsterdam? Him I shall by and by behold; not betting at Newmarket, but drinking wine and ardent spirits in the Taverns of Geneva. Ill-gotten wealth endures not; Rascaldom has no strong-box. Countess de Lamotte, for what a set of cormorant scoundrels hast thou labored, art thou still laboring!

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[1] See Lamotte.

[2] Grey lived in No. 13 New Bond Street; Jeffreys in Piccadilly (Rohan's *Mémoire pour;* see also *Count* de Lamotte's Narrative, in the *Mémoires Justificatifs*). Rohan says, "Jeffreys bought more than £10,000 worth."

Still laboring, we may say : for as the fatal 30th of July approaches, what is to be looked for but universal Earthquake; Mud-explosion that will blot out the face of Nature? Methinks, stood I in thy pattens, Dame de Lamotte, I would cut and run. — "Run!" exclaims she, with a toss of indignant astonishment: "Calumniated Innocence run?" For it is singular how in some minds, which are mere bottomless "chaotic whirlpools of gilt shreds," there is no deliberate Lying whatever; and nothing is either believed or disbelieved, but only (with some transient suitable Histrionic emotion) spoken and heard.

Had Dame de Lamotte a certain greatness of character, then; at least, a strength of transcendent audacity, amounting to the bastard-heroic? Great, indubitably great, is her Dramaturgic and Histrionic talent; but as for the rest, one must answer, with reluctance, No. Mrs. Facing-both-ways is a "Spark of vehement Life," but the farthest in the world from a brave woman: she did not, in any case, show the bravery of a woman; did, in many cases, show the mere screaming trepidation of one. Her grand quality is rather to be reckoned negative: the "untamableness" as of a fly; the "wax-cloth dress" from which so much ran down like water. Small sparrows, as I learn, have been trained to fire cannon; but would make poor Artillery Officers in a Waterloo. Thou dost not call that Cork a strong swimmer? Which nevertheless shoots, without hurt, the Falls of Niagara; defies the thunder-bolt itself to sink it, for more than a moment. Without intellect, imagination, power of attention, or any spiritual faculty, how brave were one, — with fit motive for it, such as hunger! How much might one dare, by the simplest of methods, by not thinking of it, not knowing it! — Besides, is not Cagliostro, foolish blustering Quack, still here? No scapegoat had ever broader back. The Cardinal too, has he not money? Queen's Majesty, even in effigy, shall not be insulted; the Soubises, De Marsans, and high and puissant Cousins, must huddle the matter up: Calumniated Innocence, in the most universal of Earthquakes, will find *some* crevice to whisk through, as she has so often done.

But all this while how fares it with his Eminence, left somnambulating the *Promenade de la Rose;* and at times truculently stamping? Alas, ill, and ever worse. The starving method, singular as it may seem, brings no capitulation; brings only, after a month's waiting, our tutelary Countess, with a gilt Autograph, indeed, and "all wrapt in silk threads, sealed where they cross," — but which we read with curses.[1]

We must back again to Paris; there pen new Expostulations; which our unwearied Countess will take charge of, but, alas, can get no answer to. However, is not the 30th of July coming? — Behold, on the 19th of that month, the shortest, most careless of Autographs: with some fifteen hundred pounds of real money in it, to pay the — *interest* of the first instalment; the principal, of some thirty thousand, not being at the moment perfectly convenient! Hungry Boehmer makes large eyes at this proposal; will accept the money, but only as part of payment; the man is positive: a Court of Justice, if no other means, shall get him the remainder. What now is to be done?

Farmer-general Monsieur Saint-James, Cagliostro's disciple, and wet with Tokay, will cheerfully advance the sum needed — for her Majesty's sake; thinks, however (with all his Tokay), it were good to *speak* with her Majesty first. — I observe, meanwhile, the distracted hungry Boehmer driven hither and thither, not by his fixed-idea; alas, no, but by the far more frightful *ghost* thereof, — since no payment is forthcoming. He stands, one day, speaking with a Queen's waiting-woman (Madame Campan herself), in "a thunder-shower, which neither of them notice," — so thunder-struck are they.[2] What weather-symptoms for his Eminence!

The 30th of July has come, but no money; the 30th is gone, but no money. O Eminence, what a grim farewell of

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[1] See Lamotte.

[2] Campan.

July is this of 1785. The last July went out with airs from Heaven and Trianon Roses. *These* August days, are they not worse than dogs' days; worthy to be blotted out from all Almanacs? Boehmer and Bassange thou canst still see; but only "return from them swearing."[1] Nay, what new misery is this? Our tutelary Histrionic Countess enters, distraction in her eyes:[2] she has just been at Versailles; the Queen's Majesty, with a levity of caprice which we dare not trust ourselves to characterize, declares plainly that she will deny ever having got the Necklace; ever having had, with his Eminence, any transaction whatsoever! — Mud-explosion without parallel in volcanic annals. — The Palais de Strasbourg appears to be beset with spies; the Lamottes, for the Count too is here, are packing up for Bar-sur-Aube. The Sieur Boehmer, has he fallen insane? Or into communication with Minister Breteuil? —

And so, distractedly and distractively, to the sound of all Discords in Nature, opens that Fourth, final Scenic Exhibition, composed by Destiny.

CHAPTER XV.

SCENE FOURTH: BY DESTINY.

It is Assumption-day, the 15th of August. Don thy pontificalia, Grand-Almoner; crush down these hideous temporalities out of sight. In any case, smooth thy countenance into some sort of lofty-dissolute serene: thou hast a thing they call worshipping God to enact, thyself the first actor.

The Grand-Almoner has done it. He is in Versailles *Œil-de-Bœuf* Gallery; where male and female Peerage, and all Noble France in gala various and glorious as the rainbow, waits only the signal to begin worshipping: on the serene of his lofty-dissolute countenance there can nothing be read.[1] By Heaven! he is sent for to the Royal Apartment!

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[1] Lamotte.

[2] Georgel.

He returns with the old lofty-dissolute look, inscrutably serene: has his turn for favor actually come, then? Those fifteen long years of soul's travail are to be rewarded by a birth? — Monsieur le Baron de Breteuil issues; great in his pride of place, in this the crowning moment of his life. With one radiant glance, Breteuil summons the Officer on Guard; with another, fixes Monseigneur: "*De par le Roi, Monseigneur:* you are arrested! At *your* risk, Officer!" — Curtains as of pitch-black whirlwind envelop Monseigneur, whirl off with him, to outer darkness. Versailles Gallery explodes aghast; as if Guy Fawkes's Plot had *burst* under it. "The Queen's Majesty was weeping," whisper some. There will be no Assumption service; or such a one as was never celebrated since Assumption came in fashion.

Europe, then, shall ring with it from side to side! — But why rides that Heyduc as if all the Devils drove him? It is Monseigneur's Heyduc: Monseigneur spoke three words in German to him, at the door of his Versailles Hotel; even handed him a slip of writing, which, with borrowed Pencil, "in his red square cap," he had managed to prepare on the way thither.[2] To Paris! To the Palais-Cardinal! The horse dies on reaching the stable; the Heyduc swoons on reaching the cabinet: but his slip of writing fell from his hand; and I (says the Abbé Georgel) was there. The red Portfolio, containing all the gilt Autographs, is burnt utterly, with much else, before Breteuil can arrive for apposition of the seals! — Whereby Europe, in ringing from side to side, must worry itself with guessing: and at this hour, on this paper, sees the matter in such an interesting clear-obscure.

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[1] This is Bette d'Etienville's description of him: "A handsome man, of fifty; with high complexion; hair white-gray, and the front of the head bald: of high stature; carriage noble and easy, though burdened with a certain degree of corpulency; who, I never doubted, was Monsieur de Rohan." (First *Mémoire pour.*)

[2] Georgel.

Soon Count Cagliostro and his Seraphic Countess go to join Monseigneur in State Prison. In few days follows Dame de Lamotte, from Bar-sur-Aube; Demoiselle d'Oliva by and by, from Brussels; Villette-de-Rétaux, from his Swiss retirement in the taverns of Geneva. The Bastille opens its iron bosom to them all.

CHAPTER LAST.

MISSA EST.

Thus, then, the Diamond Necklace having, on the one hand, vanished through the Horn Gate of Dreams, and so, under the pincers of Nisus Lamotte and Euryalus Villette, lost its sublunary individuality and being; and, on the other hand, all that trafficked in it, sitting now safe under lock and key, that justice may take cognizance of them, — our engagement in regard to the matter is on the point of terminating. That extraordinary "*Procès du Collier*, Necklace Trial," spinning itself through Nine other ever-memorable Months, to the astonishment of the hundred and eighty-seven assembled *Parlementiers*, and of all Quidnuncs, Journalists, Anecdotists, Satirists, in both Hemispheres, is, in every sense, a "Celebrated Trial," and belongs to Publishers of such. How, by innumerable confrontations and expiscatory questions, through entanglements, doublings and windings that fatigue eye and soul, this most involute of Lies is finally winded off to the scandalous-ridiculous cinder-heart of it, let others relate.

Meanwhile, during these Nine ever-memorable Months, till they terminate late at night precisely with the May of 1786,[1] how many fugitive leaves, quizzical, imaginative, or at least mendacious, were flying about in Newspapers; or stitched together as Pamphlets; and what heaps of others were left creeping in Manuscript, we shall not say; — having, indeed, no complete Collection of them, and what is more to the purpose, little to do with such Collection. Nevertheless, searching for some fit Capital of the composite order, to adorn adequately the now finished singular Pillar of our Narrative, what can suit us better than the following, so far as we know, yet unedited.

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[1] On the 31st of May, 1786, sentence was pronounced: about ten at night the Cardinal got out of the Bastille; large mobs hurrahing round him, — out of spleen to the Court. (See Georgel.)

Occasional Discourse, by Count Alessandro Cagliostro, Thaumaturgist, Prophet and Archquack; delivered in the Bastille: Year of Lucifer, 5789; *of the Mahometan Hegira from Mecca,* 1201; *of the Cagliostric Hegira from Palermo,* 24; *of the Vulgar Era,* 1785.

"Fellow Scoundrels, — An unspeakable Intrigue, spun from the soul of that Circe-Megæra, by our voluntary or involuntary help, has assembled us all, if not under one roof-tree, yet within one grim iron-bound ring-wall. For an appointed number of months, in the ever-rolling flow of Time, we, being gathered from the four winds, did by Destiny work together in body corporate; and, joint laborers in a Transaction already famed over the Globe, obtain unity of Name, like the Argonauts of old, as *Conquerors of the Diamond Necklace.* Ere long it is done (for ring-walls hold not captive the free Scoundrel forever); and we disperse again, over wide terrestrial Space; some of us, it may be, over the very marches of Space. Our Act hangs indissoluble together; floats wondrous in the older and older memory of men: while *we* the little band of Scoundrels, who saw each other, now hover so far asunder, to see each other no more, if not once more only on the universal Doomsday, the Last of the Days!

"In such interesting moments, while we stand within the verge of parting, and have not yet parted, methinks it were well here, in these sequestered Spaces, to institute a few general reflections. Me, as a public speaker, the Spirit of Masonry, of Philosophy and Philanthropy, and even of Prophecy, blowing mysterious from the Land of Dreams, impels to do it. Give ear, O Fellow Scoundrels, to what the Spirit utters; treasure it in your hearts, practise it in your lives.

"Sitting here, penned up in this which, with a slight metaphor, I call the Central Cloaca of Nature, where a tyrannical De Launay can forbid the bodily eye free vision, you with the mental eye see but the better. This Central Cloaca, is it not rather a Heart, into which, from all regions, mysterious conduits introduce and forcibly inject whatsoever is choicest in the Scoundrelism of the Earth; there to be absorbed, or again (by the other auricle) ejected into new circulation? Let the eye of the mind run along this immeasurable venous-arterial system; and astound itself with the magnificent extent of Scoundreldom; the deep, I may say unfathomable, significance of Scoundrelism.

"Yes, brethren, wide as the Sun's range is our Empire; wider than old Rome's in its palmiest era. I have in my time been far; in frozen Muscovy, in hot Calabria, east, west, wheresoever the sky overarches civilized man: and never hitherto saw I myself an alien; out of Scoundreldom I never was. Is it not even said, from of old, by the opposite party: '*All* men are liars'? Do they not (and this nowise 'in haste') whimperingly talk of 'one just person' (as they call him), and of the remaining thousand save one that take part with us? So decided is our majority." — (Applause.)

"Of the Scarlet Woman, — yes, Monseigneur, without offence, — of the Scarlet Woman that sits on Seven Hills, and her Black Jesuit Militia, out foraging from Pole to Pole, I speak not; for the story is too trite: nay, the Militia itself, as I see, begins to be disbanded, and invalided, for a second treachery; treachery to herself! Nor yet of Governments; for a like reason. Ambassadors, said an English punster, *lie* abroad for their masters. Their masters, we answer, lie at home for themselves. Not of all this, nor of Courtship with its Lovers'-vows, nor Courtiership, nor Attorneyism, nor Public Oratory, and Selling by Auction, do I speak: I simply ask the gainsayer, Which is the particular trade, profession, mystery, calling, or pursuit of the Sons of Adam that they successfully manage in the other way? He cannot answer! — No: Philosophy itself, both practical and even speculative, has at length, after shamefulest groping, stumbled on the plain conclusion that Sham is indispensable to Reality, as Lying to Living; that without Lying the whole business of the world, from swaying of senates to selling of tapes, must explode into anarchic discords, and so a speedy conclusion ensue.

"But the grand problem, Fellow Scoundrels, as you well know, is the *marrying* of Truth and Sham; so that they become one flesh, man and wife, and generate these three: Profit, Pudding, and Respectability that always keeps her Gig. Wondrously, indeed, do Truth and Delusion play into one another; Reality rests on Dream. Truth is but the *skin* of the bottomless Untrue: and ever, from time to time, the Untrue *sheds* it; is clear again; and the superannuated True itself becomes a Fable. Thus do all hostile things crumble back into our Empire; and of its increase there is no end.

"O brothers, to think of the Speech without meaning (which is mostly ours), and of the Speech with contrary meaning (which is wholly ours), manufactured by the organs of Mankind in one solar day! Or call it a day of Jubilee, when public Dinners are given, and Dinner-orations are delivered: or say, a Neighboring Island in time of General Election! O ye immortal gods! The mind is lost; can only admire great Nature's plenteousness with a kind of sacred wonder.

"For tell me, What is the chief end of man? 'To glorify God,' said the old Christian Sect, now happily extinct. 'To eat and find eatables by the readiest method,' answers sound Philosophy, discarding whims. If the method *readier* than this of persuasive-attraction is yet discovered, — point it out! — Brethren, I said the old Christian Sect was happily extinct: as, indeed, in Rome itself, there goes the wonderfulest traditionary Prophecy,[1] of that Nazareth Christ coming back, and being crucified a second time *there;* which truly I see not in the least how he could fail to be. Nevertheless, that old Christian whim, of an actual living and ruling God, and some sacred covenant binding all men in Him, with much other mystic stuff, does, under new or old shape, linger with a few. From these few keep yourselves forever far! They must even be left to their whim, which is not like to prove infectious.

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[1] Goethe mentions it (*Italiänische Reise*).

"But neither are we, my Fellow Scoundrels, without our Religion, our Worship; which, like the oldest, and all true Worships, is one of Fear. The Christians have their Cross, the Moslem their Crescent: but have not we too our — Gallows? Yes, *infinitely* terrible is the Gallows; it bestrides with its patibulary fork the Pit of bottomless Terror! No Manicheans are we; our God is One. Great, exceeding great, I say, is the Gallows; of old, even from the beginning, in this world; knowing neither variableness nor decadence; forever, forever, over the wreck of ages, and all civic and ecclesiastic convulsions, meal-mobs, revolutions, the Gallows with front serenely terrible towers aloft. Fellow Scoundrels, fear the Gallows, and have no other fear! *This* is the Law and the Prophets. Fear every emanation of the Gallows. And what is every buffet, with the fist, or even with the tongue, of one having authority, but some such emanation? And what is Force of Public Opinion but the infinitude of such emanations, — rushing combined on you, like a mighty storm-wind? Fear the Gallows, I say! Oh when, with its long black arm, *it* has clutched a man, what avail him all terrestrial things? These pass away, with horrid nameless dinning in his ears; and the ill-starred Scoundrel pendulates between Heaven and Earth, a thing rejected of *both*." — (Profound sensation.)

"Such, so wide in compass, high, gallows-high in dignity, is the Scoundrel Empire; and for depth, it is deeper than the Foundations of the World. For what was Creation itself wholly, according to the best Philosophers, but a Divulsion of the Time-Spirit (or Devil so called); a forceful Interruption, or breaking asunder, of the old Quiescence of Eternity? It was Lucifer that fell, and made this lordly World arise. Deep? It is bottomless-deep; the very Thought, diving, bobs up from it baffled. Is not this that they call Vice of Lying the *Adam-Kadmon*, or primeval Rude-Element, old as Chaos mother's-womb of Death and Hell; whereon their thin film of Virtue, Truth, and the like, poorly wavers — for a day? All Virtue, what is it, even by their own showing, but Vice transformed, — that is, manufactured, rendered artificial? 'Man's Vices are the roots from which his Virtues grow out and see the light,' says one: 'Yes,' add I, 'and thanklessly steal their nourishment!' Were it not for the nine hundred ninety and nine unacknowleged, perhaps martyred and calumniated Scoundrels, how were their single Just Person (with a murrain on him!) so much as possible? — Oh, it is high, high: these things are too great for me; Intellect, Imagination, flags her tired wings; the soul lost, baffled" —

— Here Dame de Lamotte tittered audibly, and muttered *Coq-d'Inde*, which, being interpreted into the Scottish tongue, signifies *Bubbly-Jock!* The Archquack, whose eyes were turned inwards as in rapt contemplation, started at the titter and mutter: his eyes flashed outwards with dilated pupil; his nostrils opened wide; his very hair seemed to stir in its long twisted pigtails (his fashion of curl); and as Indignation is said to make Poetry, it here made Prophecy, or what sounded as such. With terrible, working features, and gesticulation not recommended in any Book of Gesture, the Archquack, in voice supernally discordant, like Lions worrying Bulls of Bashan, began: —

"Sniff not, Dame de Lamotte; tremble, thou foul Circe-Megæra; thy day of desolation is at hand! Behold ye the Sanhedrim of Judges, with their fanners of written Parchment, loud-rustling, as they winnow all her chaff and down-plumage, and she stands there naked and mean? — Villette, Oliva, do *ye* blab secrets? Ye have no pity of her extreme need; she none of yours. Is thy light-giggling, untamable heart at last heavy? Hark ye! Shrieks of one cast out; whom they brand on both shoulders with iron stamp; the red-hot 'V,' thou *Voleuse*, hath it entered thy soul? Weep, Circe de Lamotte; wail there in truckle-bed, and hysterically gnash thy teeth: nay do, smother thyself in thy door-mat coverlid; thou hast found thy mates; thou art in the Salpêtrière! — Weep, daughter of the high and puissant Sans-inexpressibles! Buzz of Parisian Gossipry is about thee; but not to help thee: no, to eat before thy time. What shall a King's Court do with thee, thou unclean thing, while thou yet livest? Escape! Flee to utmost countries; hide there, if thou canst, thy mark of Cain! — In the Babylon of Fog-land! Ha! is that my

London? See I Judas Iscariot Égalité? Print, yea print abundantly the abominations of your two hearts: breath of rattlesnakes can bedim the steel mirror, but only for a time.— And there! Ay, there at last! Tumblest thou from the lofty leads, poverty-stricken, O thriftless daughter of the high and puissant, escaping bailiffs? Descendest thou precipitate, in dead night, from window in the third story; hurled forth by Bacchanals, to whom thy shrill tongue had grown unbearable?[1] Yea, through the smoke of that new Babylon thou fallest headlong; one long scream of screams makes night hideous: thou liest there, shattered like addle egg, 'nigh to the Temple of Flora!' O Lamotte, has thy *Hypocrisia* ended, then? Thy many characters were all acted. Here at last thou actest not, but art what thou seemest: a mangled squelch of gore, confusion and abomination; which men huddle underground, with no burial-stone. Thou gallows-carrion!"—

Here the Prophet turned up his nose (the broadest of the eighteenth century), and opened wide his nostrils with such a greatness of disgust, that all the audience, even Lamotte herself, sympathetically imitated him.—"O Dame de Lamotte! Dame de Lamotte! Now, when the circle of thy existence lies complete; and my eye glances over these twoscore and three years that were lent thee, to do evil as thou couldst; and I behold thee a bright-eyed little Tatterdemalion, begging and gathering sticks in the Bois de Boulogne; and also at length a squelched Putrefaction, here on London pavements; with the head-dressings and hungerings, the gaddings and hysterical gigglings that came between,—*what* shall I say was the meaning of thee at all?—

"Villette-de-Rétaux! Have the catchpoles trepanned thee, by sham of battle, in thy Tavern, from the sacred Republican soil?[2] It is thou that wert the hired Forger of Handwritings?

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[1] The English Translator of Lamotte's *Life* says, she fell from the leads of her house, nigh the Temple of Flora, endeavoring to escape seizure for debt; and was taken up so much hurt that she died in consequence. Another report runs, that she was flung out of window, as in the Cagliostric text. One way or other, she did die on the 23d of August, 1791 (*Biographie Universelle*, xxx. 287). Where the "Temple of Flora" was, or is, one knows not.

[2] See Georgel, and Villette's *Mémoire*.

Thou wilt confess it? Depart, unwhipt yet accursed. — Ha! The dread Symbol of our Faith? Swings aloft, on the Castle of St. Angelo, a Pendulous Mass, which I think I discern to be the body of Villette! There let him end; the sweet morsel of our Juggernaut.

"Nay, weep not thou, disconsolate Oliva; blear not thy bright blue eyes, daughter of the shady Garden! Thee shall the Sanhedrim not harm: this Cloaca of Nature emits thee; as notablest of unfortunate females, thou shalt have choice of husbands not without capital; and accept one.[1] Know this; for the vision of it is true.

"But the Anointed Majesty whom ye profaned? Blow, spirit of Egyptian Masonry, blow aside the thick curtains of Space! Lo you, her eyes are red with their first tears of pure bitterness; not with their last. Tirewoman Campan is choosing, from the Printshops of the Quais, the reputed-best among the hundred likenesses of Circe de Lamotte:[2] a Queen shall consider if the basest of women ever, by any accident, darkened daylight or candle-light for the highest. The Portrait answers: Never!" — (Sensation in the audience).

"— Ha! What is *this?* Angels, Uriel, Anachiel, and ye other five; Pentagon of Rejuvenescence; Power that destroyedest Original Sin; Earth, Heaven, and thou Outer Limbo which men name Hell! Does the EMPIRE OF IMPOSTURE waver? Burst there, in starry sheen, updarting, Light-rays from out *its* dark foundations; as it rocks and heaves, not in travail-throes, but in death-throes? Yea, Light-rays, piercing, clear, that salute the Heavens, — lo, they *kindle* it; their starry clearness becomes as red Hell-fire! IMPOSTURE is in flames, Imposture is burnt up: one Red-Sea of Fire, wild-billowing enwraps the World; with its fire-tongue licks at the very Stars. Thrones are hurled into it, and Dubois Mitres, and Prebendal Stalls that drop fatness, and — ha! what see I? — all the *Gigs* of Creation: all, all! Woe is me! Never since Pharaoh's Chariots, in the Red-Sea of water, was there wreck of Wheel-vehicles like this in the sea of Fire. Desolate, as ashes, as gases, shall they wander in the wind.

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[1] In the *Affaire du Collier* is this MS. Note: "Gay d'Oliva, a common-girl of the Palais-Royal, who was chosen to play a part in this Business, got married, some years afterwards, to one Beausire, an Ex-Noble, formerly attached to the D'Artois Household. In 1790 he was Captain of the National Guard Company of the Temple. He then retired to Choisy, and managed to be named Procureur of that Commune: he finally employed himself in drawing up Lists of Proscription in the Luxembourg Prison, when he played the part of informer (*mouton*). See *Tableau des Prisons de Paris sous Robespierre.*" These details are correct. In the *Mémoires sur les Prisons* (new Title of the Book just referred to), ii. 171, we find this: "The second Denouncer was Beausire, an Ex-Noble, known under the old government for his intrigues. To give an idea of him, it is enough to say that he married the D'Oliva," &c., as in the MS. Note already given. Finally is added: "He was the main spy of Boyenval; who, however, said that he made use of him; but that Fouquier-Tinville did not like him, and would have him guillotined in good time."

[2] See Campan.

"Higher, higher yet flames the Fire-Sea; crackling with new dislocated timber; hissing with leather and prunella. The metal Images are molten; the marble Images become mortar-lime; the stone Mountains sulkily explode. RESPECTABILITY, with all her collected Gigs inflamed for funeral pyre, wailing, leaves the Earth: not to return save under new Avatar. Imposture, how it burns, through generations: how it is burnt up — for a time. The World is black ashes; which, ah, when will they grow green? The Images all run into amorphous Corinthian brass; all Dwellings of men destroyed; the very mountains peeled and riven, the valleys black and dead: it is an empty World! Woe to them that shall be born then! — A King, a Queen (ah me!) were hurled in; did rustle once; flew aloft, crackling, like paper-scroll. Oliva's Husband was hurled in; Iscariot Égalité; thou grim De Launay, with thy grim Bastille; whole kindreds and peoples; five millions of mutually destroying Men. For it is the End of the Dominion of IMPOSTURE (which is Darkness and opaque Fire-damp); and the burning up, with unquenchable fire, of all the Gigs that are in the Earth!" — Here the Prophet paused, fetching a deep sigh; and the Cardinal uttered a kind of faint, tremulous Hem!

"Mourn not, O Monseigneur, spite of thy nephritic colic and many infirmities. For thee mercifully it was not unto death.[1] O Monseigneur (for thou hadst a touch of goodness), who would not weep over thee, if he also laughed? Behold! The not too judicious Historian, that long years hence, amid remotest wildernesses, writes thy Life, and names thee *Mud-volcano;* even he shall reflect that it *was* thy Life this same; thy *only* chance through whole Eternity; which thou (poor gambler) hast expended *so:* and, even over his hard heart, a breath of dewy pity for thee shall blow. — O Monseigneur, thou wert not all ignoble: thy Mud-volcano was but strength dislocated, fire misapplied. Thou wentest ravening through the world; no Life-elixir or Stone of the Wise could *we* two (for want of funds) discover: a foulest Circe undertook to fatten thee; and thou hadst to fill thy belly with the east-wind. And burst? By the Masonry of Enoch, No! Behold, has not thy Jesuit Familiar his Scouts dim-flying over the deep of human things? Cleared art thou of crime, save that of fixed-idea; weepest, a repentant exile, in the Mountains of Auvergne. Neither shall the Red Fire-sea itself consume thee; only consume thy Gig, and, instead of Gig (O rich exchange!), restore thy Self. Safe beyond the Rhine-stream, thou livest peaceful days; savest many from the fire, and anointest their smarting burns. Sleep finally, in thy mother's bosom, in a good old age!" — The Cardinal gave a sort of guttural murmur, or gurgle, which ended in a long sigh.

"O Horrors, as ye shall be called," again burst forth the Quack, "why have ye missed the Sieur de Lamotte; why not of him, too, made gallows-carrion? Will spear, or sword-stick, thrust at him (or supposed to be thrust), through window of hackney-coach, in Piccadilly of the Babylon of Fog, where he jolts disconsolate, not let out the imprisoned animal existence? Is he poisoned, too?[2] Poison will not kill the Sieur Lamotte; nor steel, nor massacres.[3] Let him drag his utterly superfluous life to a second and a third generation; and even admit the not too judicious Historian to see his face before he die.

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[1] Rohan was elected of the Constituent Assembly; and even got a compliment or two in it, as Court-victim, from here and there a man of weak judgment. He was one of the first who, recalcitrating against "Civil Constitution of the Clergy" &c., took himself across the Rhine.

[2] See Lamotte's Narrative (*Mémoires Justificatifs*).

[3] Lamotte, after his wife's death, had returned to Paris; and been arrested, — *not* for building churches. The Sentence of the old Parlement against

"But, ha!" cried he, and stood wide-staring, horror-struck, as if some Cribb's fist had knocked the wind out of him: "O horror of horrors! Is it not Myself I see? Roman Inquisition! Long months of cruel baiting! *Life of Giuseppe Balsamo!* Cagliostro's Body still lying in St. Leo Castle, his *Self* fled—*whither?* By-standers wag their heads, and say: 'The Brow of Brass, behold how it has got all unlacquered; these Pinchbeck lips can lie no more!' Eheu! Ohoo!"—And he burst into unstanchable blubbering of tears; and sobbing out the moanfulest broken howl, sank down in swoon; to be put to bed by De Launay and others.

Thus spoke (or thus might have spoken), and prophesied, the Archquack Cagliostro: and truly much better than he ever else did: for not a jot or tittle of it (save only that of our promised Interview with Nestor de Lamotte, which looks unlikelier than ever, for we have not heard of him, dead or living,

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him, in regard to the Necklace Business, he gets annulled by the new Courts; but is nevertheless "retained in confinement" (*Moniteur* Newspaper, 7th August, 1792). He was still in Prison at the time the September Massacre broke out. From Maton de la Varenne we cite the following grim passage: Maton is in La Force Prison.

"At one in the morning" (of Monday, 3d Sept., 1792), writes Maton, "the grate that led to our quarter was again opened. Four men in uniform, holding each a naked sabre and blazing torch, mounted to our corridor; a turnkey showing the way; and entered a room close on ours, to investigate a box, which they broke open. This done, they halted in the gallery; and began interrogating one Cuissa, to know where Lamotte was; who, they said, under pretext of finding a treasure, which they should share in, had swindled one of them out of 300 livres, having asked him to dinner for that purpose. The wretched Cuissa, whom they had in their power, and who lost his life that night, answered, all trembling, that he remembered the fact well, but could not say what had become of the prisoner. Resolute to find this Lamotte and confront him with Cuissa, they ascended into other rooms, and made farther rummaging there; but apparently without effect, for I heard them say to one another: 'Come, search among the corpses, then; for, *nom de Dieu!* we must know what is become of him.'" (*Ma Résurrection*, par Maton de la Varenne; reprinted in the *Histoire Parlementaire*, xviii. 142.)—Lamotte lay in the Bicêtre Prison; but had got out, precisely in the nick of time,—and dived beyond soundings.

since 1826) — but has turned out to be literally *true.* As indeed, in all this History, one jot or tittle of untruth, that we could render true, is perhaps not discoverable; much as the distrustful reader may have disbelieved.

Here, then, our little labor ends. The Necklace was, and is no more: the stones of it again "circulate in Commerce," some of them perhaps in Rundle's at this hour; and may give rise to what other Histories we know not. The Conquerors of it, every one that trafficked in it, have they not all had their due, which was Death?

This little Business, like a little cloud, bodied itself forth in skies clear to the unobservant: but with such hues of deep-tinted villany, dissoluteness and general delirium as, to the observant, betokened it electric; and wise men, a Goethe for example, boded Earthquakes. Has not the Earthquake come?

MIRABEAU.[1]

[1837.]

A PROVERB says, "The house that is a-building looks not as the house that is built." Environed with rubbish and mortar-heaps, with scaffold-poles, hodmen, dust-clouds, some rudiments only of the thing that is to be, can, to the most observant, disclose themselves through the mean tumult of the thing that hitherto is. How true is this same with regard to all works and facts whatsoever in our world; emphatically true in regard to the highest fact and work which our world witnesses, — the Life of what we call an Original Man. Such a man is one not made altogether by the common pattern; one whose phases and goings-forth cannot be prophesied of, even approximately; though, indeed, by their very newness and strangeness they most of all provoke prophecy. A man of this kind, while he lives on earth, is "unfolding himself out of nothing into something," surely under very complex conditions: he is drawing continually towards him, in continual succession and variation, the materials of his structure, nay his very plan of it, from the whole realm of Accident, you may say, and from the whole realm of Free-will: he is *building* his life together in this manner; a guess and a problem as yet, not to others only but to himself. Hence such criticism by the by-standers; loud no-knowledge, loud mis-knowledge! It is like the opening of the Fisherman's Casket in the Arabian Tale, this beginning and growing up of a life: vague smoke wavering hither and thither; some features of a Genie looming through; of the ultimate shape of which no fisherman or man can judge. And yet, as we say, men do judge, and pass provisional sentence, being forced to it; you can predict with what accuracy! "Look at the audience in a theatre," says one: "the life of a man is there compressed within five hours' duration; is transacted on an open stage, with lighted lamps, and what the fittest words and art of genius can do to make the spirit of it clear; yet listen, when the curtain falls, what a discerning public will say of that!" And now, if the drama extended over threescore and ten years; and were enacted, not with a view to clearness, but rather indeed with a view to concealment, often in the deepest attainable involution of obscurity; and your discerning public, occupied otherwise, cast its eye on the business now here for a moment, and then there for a moment? Woe to him, answer we, who has no court of appeal against the world's judgment! He is a doomed man: doomed by conviction to hard penalties; nay purchasing acquittal (too probably) by a still harder penalty, that of being a triviality, superficiality, self-advertiser, and partial or total quack, which is the hardest penalty of all.

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[1] LONDON AND WESTMINSTER REVIEW, No. 8. — *Mémoires biographiques, littéraires et politiques de Mirabeau; écrits par lui-même, par son Père, son Oncle et son Fils Adoptif* (Memoirs, biographical, literary and political, of Mirabeau; written by himself, by his Father, his Uncle and his Adopted Son). 8 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1834–1836.

But suppose farther, that the man, as we said, was an original man; that his life-drama would not and could not be measured by the three unities alone, but partly by a rule of its own too: still farther, that the transactions he had mingled in were great and world-dividing; that of all his judges there were not one who had not something to love him for unduly, to hate him for unduly! Alas, is it not precisely in this case, where the whole world is promptest to judge, that the whole world is likeliest to be wrong; natural opacity being so doubly and trebly darkened by accidental difficulty and perversion? The crabbed moralist had some show of reason who said: To judge of an original contemporary man, you must, in general, reverse the world's judgment about him; the world is not only wrong on that matter, but cannot on any such matter be right.

One comfort is, that the world is ever working itself righter and righter on such matters; that a continual revisal and rectification of the world's first judgment on them is inevitably going on. For, after all, the world loves its original men, and can in nowise forget them; not till after a long while; sometimes not till after thousands of years. Forgetting *them,* what, indeed, should it remember? The world's wealth is its original men; by these and their works it is a world and not a waste: the memory and record of what MEN it bore — this is the sum of its strength, its sacred "property forever," whereby it upholds itself, and steers forward, better or worse, through the yet undiscovered deep of Time. All knowledge, all art, all beautiful or precious possession of existence, is, in the long-run, this, or connected with this. Science itself, is it not under one of its most interesting aspects, Biography; is it not the Record of the *Work* which an original man, still named by us, or not now named, was blessed by the heavens to do? That Sphere-and-cylinder is the monument and abbreviated history of the man Archimedes; not to be forgotten, probably, till the world itself vanish. Of Poets, and what they have done, and how the world loves them, let us, in these days, very singular in respect of that Art, say nothing, or next to nothing. The greatest modern of the poetic guild has already said: "Nay, if thou wilt have it, who but the poet first formed gods for us, brought them down to us, raised us up to them?"

Another remark, on a lower scale, not unworthy of notice, is by Jean Paul: that "as in art, so in conduct, or what we call morals, before there can be an Aristotle with his critical canons, there must be a Homer, many Homers with their heroic performances." In plainer words, the original man is the true creator (or call him revealer) of Morals too: it is from his example that precepts enough are derived, and written down in books and systems: he properly is the *thing;* all that follows after is but talk about the thing, better or worse interpretation of it, more or less wearisome and ineffectual discourse of logic on it. A remark this of Jean Paul's which, well meditated, may seem one of the most pregnant lately written on these matters. If any man had the ambition of building a new system of morals (not a promising enterprise, at this time of day), there is no remark known to us which might better serve him as a chief corner-stone, whereon to found, and to build, high enough, nothing doubting; — high, for instance, as the Christian Gospel itself. And to whatever other heights man's destiny may yet carry him! Consider whether it was not, from the first, by example, or say rather by human exemplars, and such reverent imitation or abhorrent aversion and avoidance as these gave rise to, that man's duties were made indubitable to him? Also, if it is not yet, in these last days, by very much the same means (example, precept, prohibition, "force of public opinion," and other forcings and inducings), that the like result is brought about; and, from the Woolsack down to the Treadmill, from Almack's to Chalk Farm and the west end of Newgate, the incongruous whirlpool of life is forced and induced to whirl with some attempt at regularity? The two Mosaic Tables were of simple limited stone; no logic appended to them: we, in our days, are privileged with Logic, — Systems of Morals, Professors of Moral Philosophy, Theories of Moral Sentiment, Utilities, Sympathies, Moral Senses not a few; useful for those that feel comfort in them. But to the observant eye, is it not still plain that the rule of man's life rests not very steadily on logic (rather carries logic unsteadily resting on *it*, as an excuse, an exposition, or ornamental solacement to oneself and others); that ever, as of old, the thing a man will do is the thing he feels commanded to do: of which command, again, the origin and reasonableness remains often as good as *in*demonstrable by logic; and, indeed, lies mainly in this, That it has been demonstrated otherwise and better; by experiment, namely; that an experimental (what we name original) man has already done it, and we have *seen* it to be good and reasonable, and now know it to be so once and forevermore? — Enough of this.

He were a sanguine individual surely that should turn to the French Revolution for new rules of conduct, and creators or exemplars of morality, — except, indeed, exemplars of the gibbeted *in-terrorem* sort. A greater work, it is often said, was never done in the world's history by men so small.

Twenty-five millions (say these severe critics) are hurled forth out of all their old habitudes, arrangements, harnessings and garnitures, into the new, quite void arena and career of *Sansculottism ;* there to show what originality is in them. Fanfaronading and gesticulation, vehemence, effervescence, heroic desperation, they do show in abundance ; but of what one can call originality, invention, natural stuff or character, amazingly little. Their heroic desperation, such as it was, we will honor and even venerate, as a new document (call it rather a renewal of that primeval ineffaceable document and charter) of the manhood of man. But, for the rest, there were Federations ; there were Festivals of Fraternity, "the Statue of Nature pouring water from her two *mammelles,*" and the august Deputies all drinking of it from the same iron saucer ; Weights and Measures were attempted to be changed ; the Months of the Year became Pluviose, Thermidor, Messidor (till Napoleon said, *Il faudra se débarrasser de ce Messidor,* One must get this Messidor sent about its business) : also Mrs. Momoro and others rode prosperous, as Goddesses of Reason ; and then, these being mostly guillotined, Mahomet Robespierre did, with bouquet in hand, and in new black breeches, in front of the Tuileries, pronounce the scraggiest of prophetic discourses on the *Être Suprême,* and set fire to much emblematic pasteboard : — all this, and an immensity of such, the Twenty-five millions did devise and accomplish ; but (apart from their heroic desperation, which was no miracle either, beside that of the old Dutch, for instance) this, and the like of this, was almost all. Their arena of *Sansculottism* was the most original arena opened to man for above a thousand years ; and they, at bottom, were unexpectedly commonplace in it.

Exaggerated commonplace, triviality run distracted, and a kind of universal "Frenzy of John Dennis," is the figure they exhibit. The brave Forster, — sinking slowly of broken heart, in the midst of that volcanic chaos of the Reign of Terror, and clinging still to the cause, which, though now bloody and terrible, he believed to be the highest, and for which he had sacrificed all, country, kindred, fortune, friends and life, — compares the Revolution, indeed, to "an explosion and new creation of the world;" but the actors in it, who went buzzing about him, to a "*handvoll mücken*, handful of flies."[1] And yet, one may add, this same explosion of a world was their work; the work of these — flies? The truth is, neither Forster nor any man can see a French Revolution; it is like seeing the ocean: poor Charles Lamb complained that he could not see the multitudinous ocean at all, but only some insignificant fraction of it from the deck of the Margate hoy. It must be owned, however (urge these severe critics), that examples of rabid triviality do abound in the French Revolution, to a lamentable extent. Consider Maximilien Robespierre; for the greater part of two years, what one may call Autocrat of France. A poor sea-green (*verdâtre*) atrabiliar Formula of a man; without head, without heart, or any grace, gift, or even vice beyond common, if it were not vanity, astucity, diseased rigor (which some count strength) as of a cramp: really a most poor sea-green individual in spectacles; meant by Nature for a Methodist parson of the stricter sort, to doom men who departed from the written confession; to chop fruitless shrill logic; to contend, and suspect, and ineffectually wrestle and wriggle; and, on the whole, to love, or to know, or to be (properly speaking) Nothing: — this was he who, the sport of wracking winds, saw himself whirled aloft to command *la première nation de l'univers*, and all men shouting long life to him: one of the most lamentable, tragic, sea-green objects ever whirled aloft in that manner, in any country, to his own swift destruction, and the world's long wonder!

So argue these severe critics of the French Revolution: with whom we argue not here; but remark rather, what is more to the purpose, that the French Revolution did disclose original men: among the twenty-five millions, at least one or two units. Some reckon, in the present stage of the business, as many as three: Napoleon, Danton, Mirabeau. Whether more will come to light, or of what sort, when the computation is quite liquidated, one cannot say: meanwhile let the world be thankful for these three;—as, indeed, the world is; loving original men, without limit, were they never so questionable, well knowing how rare they are! To us, accordingly, it is rather interesting to observe how on these three also, questionable as they surely are, the old process is repeating itself; how these also are getting known in their true likeness. A second generation, relieved in some measure from the spectral hallucinations, hysterical ophthalmia and natural panic-delirium of the first contemporary one, is gradually coming to discern and measure what its predecessor could only execrate and shriek over: for, as our Proverb said, the dust is sinking, the rubbish-heaps disappear; the built house, such as it is, and was appointed to be, stands visible, better or worse.

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[1] Forster's *Briefe und Nachlass.*

Of Napoleon Bonaparte, what with so many bulletins, and such self-proclamation from artillery and battle-thunder, loud enough to ring through the deafest brain, in the remotest nook of this earth, and now, in consequence, with so many biographies, histories and historical arguments for and against, it may be said that *he* can now shift for himself; that his true figure is in a fair way of being ascertained. Doubtless it will be found one day what significance was in him; how (we quote from a New-England Book) "the man was a divine missionary, though unconscious of it; and preached, through the cannon's throat, that great doctrine, '*La carrière ouverte aux talens*, The tools to him that can handle them,' which is our ultimate Political Evangel, wherein alone can Liberty lie. Madly enough he preached, it is true, as enthusiasts and first missionaries are wont; with imperfect utterance, amid much frothy rant; yet as articulately perhaps as the case admitted. Or call him, if you will, an American backwoodsman, who had to fell unpenetrated forests, and battle with innumerable wolves, and did not entirely forbear strong liquor, rioting and even theft; whom, nevertheless, the peaceful sower will follow, and, as he cuts the boundless harvest, bless." — From "the incarnate Moloch," which the word once was, onwards to this quiet version, there is a considerable progress.

Still more interesting is it, not without a touch almost of pathos, to see how the rugged *Terræ Filius* Danton begins likewise to emerge, from amid the blood-tinted obscurations and shadows of horrid cruelty, into calm light; and seems now not an Anthropophagus, but partly a man. On the whole, the Earth feels it to be something to have a "Son of Earth;" *any* reality, rather than a hypocrisy and formula! With a man that went honestly to work with himself, and said and acted, in any sense, with the whole mind of him, there is always something to be done. Satan himself, according to Dante, was a praiseworthy object, compared with those *juste-milieu* angels (so over-numerous in times like ours) who "were *neither* faithful nor rebellious," but were for their little selves only: trimmers, moderates, plausible persons, who, in the Dantean Hell, are found doomed to this frightful penalty, that "they have not the hope to die (*non han speranza di morte*);" but sunk in torpid death-life, in mud and the plague of flies, they are to doze and dree forever, — "hateful to God and to the Enemies of God:"—

> "*Non ragionam di lor, ma guarda e passa!*"

If Bonaparte were the "armed Soldier of Democracy," invincible while he continued true to that, then let us call this Danton the *Enfant Perdu*, and *un*enlisted Revolter and Titan of Democracy, which could not yet have soldiers or discipline, but was by the nature of it lawless. An Earthborn, we say, yet honestly born of Earth! In the *Memoirs of Garat*, and elsewhere, one sees these fire-eyes beam with earnest insight, fill with the water of tears; the broad rude features speak withal of wild human sympathies; that Antæus' bosom also held a heart. "It is not the alarm-cannon that you hear," cries he to the terror-struck, when the Prussians were already at Verdun: "it is the *pas de charge* against our enemies." "*De l'audace, et encore de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace*, To dare, and again to dare, and without limit to dare!" — there is nothing left but that. Poor "Mirabeau of the Sansculottes," what a mission! And it could not be but done, — and it was done!

But, indeed, may there not be, if well considered, more virtue in this feeling itself, once bursting earnest from the wild heart, than in whole lives of immaculate Pharisees and Respectabilities, with their eye ever set on "character," and the letter of the law: "*Que mon nom soit flétri*, Let my name be blighted, then; let the cause be glorious, and have victory!" By and by, as we predict, the Friend of Humanity, since so many Knife-grinders have no story to tell him, will find some sort of story in this Danton. A rough-hewn giant of a man, not anthropophagous entirely; whose "figures of speech," and also of action, "are all gigantic;" whose "voice reverberates from the domes," and dashes Brunswick across the marches in a very wrecked condition. Always his total freedom from cant is one thing; even in his briberies, and sins as to money, there is a frankness, a kind of broad greatness. Sincerity, a great rude sincerity of insight and of purpose, dwelt in the man, which quality is the root of all: a man who could see through many things, and would stop at very few things; who marched and fought impetuously forward, in the questionablest element; and now bears the penalty, in a name "blighted," yet, as we say, visibly clearing itself. Once cleared, why should not this name too have significance for men? The wild history is a tragedy, as all human histories are. Brawny Dantons, still to the present hour, rend the glebe, as simple brawny Farmers, and reap peaceable harvests, at Arcis-sur-Aube; and *this* Danton —! It is an *un*rhymed tragedy; very bloody, fuliginous (after the manner of the *elder* dramatists); yet full of tragic elements; not undeserving natural pity and fear. In quiet times, perhaps still at a great distance, the happier on-looker may stretch out the hand, across dim centuries, to him, and say: "Ill-starred brother, how thou foughtest with wild lion-strength, and yet not with strength *enough*, and flamedst aloft, and wert trodden down of sin and misery; — behold, thou also wert a man!" It is said there lies a Biography of Danton written, in Paris, at this moment: but the editor waits till the "force of public opinion" ebb a little. Let him publish, with utmost convenient despatch, and say what he knows, if he do know it: the lives of remarkable men are always worth understanding instead of misunderstanding; and public opinion must positively adjust itself the best way it can.

But without doubt the far most interesting, best-gifted of this questionable trio is not the Mirabeau of the Sansculottes, but the Mirabeau himself: a man of much finer nature than either of the others; of a genius equal in strength, we will say, to Napoleon's; but a much humaner genius, almost a poetic one. With wider sympathies of his own, he appeals far more persuasively to the sympathies of men.

Of him too it is interesting to notice the progressive dawning, out of calumny, misrepresentation and confused darkness, into visibility and light; and how the world manifests its continued curiosity about him; and as book after book comes forth with new evidence, the matter is again taken up, the old judgment on it revised and anew revised; — whereby, in fine, we can hope the right, or approximately right, sentence will be found; and so the question be left settled. It would seem this Mirabeau also is one whose memory the world will not, for a long while, let die. Very different from many a high memory, dead and deep-buried long since then! In his lifetime, even in the final effulgent part of it, this Mirabeau took upon him to write, with a sort of awe-struck feeling, to our Mr. Wilberforce; and did not, that we can find, get the benefit of any answer. Pitt was prime minister, and then Fox, then again Pitt, and again Fox, in sweet vicissitude; and the noise of them, reverberating through Brookes's and the club-rooms, through tavern-dinners, electioneering hustings, leading-articles, filled all the earth; and it seemed as if those two (though which might be *which*, you could not say) were the Ormuzd and Ahriman of political Nature; — and now!

Such difference is there, once more, between an original man, of never such questionable sort, and the most dexterous, cunningly devised parliamentary mill. The difference is great; and one of those on which the future time makes largest contrast with the present. Nothing can be more important than the mill while it continues and grinds; important, above all, to those who have sacks about the hopper. But the grinding once done, how can the memory of it endure? It is important now to no individual, not even to the individual with a sack. So that, this tumult well over, the memory of the original man, and of what small revelation he, as Son of Nature and brother-man, could make, does naturally rise on us: his memorable sayings, actings and sufferings, the very vices and crimes he fell into, are a kind of pabulum which all mortals claim their right to.

Concerning *Peuchet, Chaussard, Gassicourt,* and, indeed, all the former Biographers of Mirabeau, there can little be said here, except that they abound with errors: the present ultimate *Fils Adoptif* has never done picking faults with them. Not as memorials of Mirabeau, but as memorials of the world's relation to him, of the world's treatment of him, they may, a little longer, have some perceptible significance. From poor Peuchet (he was known in the *Moniteur* once), and other the like laborers in the vineyard, you can justly demand thus much; and not justly much more.

Etienne Dumont's *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau* might not, at first sight, seem an advance towards true knowledge, but a movement the other way, and yet it was really an advance. The book, for one thing, was hailed by a universal choral blast from all manner of reviews and periodical literatures that Europe, in all its spellable dialects, had: whereby, at least, the minds of men were again drawn to the subject; and so, amid whatever hallucination, ancient or new-devised, some increase of insight was unavoidable. Besides, the book itself did somewhat. Numerous specialties about the great Frenchman, as read by the eyes of the little Genevese, were conveyed there; and could be deciphered, making allowances. Dumont is faithful, veridical; within his own limits he has even a certain freedom, a picturesqueness and light clearness. It is true, the whim he had of looking at the great Mirabeau as a thing set in motion mainly by him (M. Dumont) and such as he, was one of the most wonderful to be met with in psychology. Nay, more wonderful still, how the reviewers, pretty generally, some from whom better was expected, took up the same with aggravations; and it seemed settled on all sides, that here again a pretender had been stripped, and the great made as little as the rest of us (much to our comfort); that, in fact, figuratively speaking, this enormous Mirabeau, the sound of whom went forth to all lands, was no other than an enormous trumpet, or coach-horn, of japanned tin, through which a dexterous little M. Dumont was blowing all the while, and making the noise! Some men and reviewers have strange theories of man. Let any son of Adam, the shallowest now living, try honestly to scheme out, within his head, an existence of this kind; and say how verisimilar it looks! A life and business actually conducted on such coach-horn principle, — we say not the life and business of a statesman and world-leader, but say of the poorest laceman and tape-seller, — were one of the chief miracles hitherto on record. Oh, M. Dumont! But thus too, when old Sir Christopher struck down the last stone in the Dome of St. Paul's, was it he that carried up the stone? No; it was a certain strong-backed man, never mentioned (covered with envious or unenvious oblivion), — probably of the Sister Island.

Let us add, however, more plainly, that M. Dumont was less to blame here than his reviewers were. The good Dumont accurately records what ingenious journey-work and fetching-and-carrying he did for his Mirabeau; interspersing many an anecdote, which the world is very glad of; extenuating nothing, we do hope, nor exaggerating anything: this is what he did, and had a clear right and call to do. And what if it failed, not altogether, yet in some measure if it did fail, to strike him, that he still properly was but a Dumont? Nay, that the gift this Mirabeau had of enlisting such respectable Dumonts to do hodwork and even skilful handiwork for him; and of ruling them and bidding them by the look of his eye; and of making them cheerfully fetch-and-carry for him, and serve him as loyal subjects, with a kind of chivalry and willingness, — that this gift was precisely the kinghood of the man, and did itself stamp him as a leader among men! Let no man blame M. Dumont (as some have too harshly done); his error is of oversight, and venial; his worth to us is indisputable. On the other hand, let all men blame such public instructors and periodical individuals as drew that inference and life-theory for him, and brayed it forth in that loud manner; or rather, on the whole, do not blame, but pardon, and pass by on the other side. Such things are an ordained trial of public patience, which perhaps is the better for discipline; and seldom, or rather never, do any lasting injury.

Close following on Dumont's *Reminiscences* came this Biography by M. Lucas Montigny, "Adopted Son;" the first volume in 1834, the rest at short intervals; and lies complete now in Eight considerable Volumes octavo: concerning which we are now to speak, unhappily, in the disparaging sense. In fact it is impossible for any man to say unmixed good of M. Lucas's work. That he, as Adopted Son, has lent himself so resolutely to the washing of his hero white, and even to the white-washing of him where the natural color was black, be this no blame to him; or even, if you will, be it praise. If a man's Adopted Son may not write the best book he can for him, then who may? But the fatal circumstance is, that M. Lucas Montigny has not written a book at all; but has merely clipped and cut out, and cast together the materials for a book, which other men are still wanted to write. On the whole, M. Montigny rather surprises one. For the reader probably knows, what all the world whispers to itself, that when "Mirabeau, in 1783, adopted this infant born the year before," he had the best of all conceivable obligations to adopt him; having, by his own act (*non*-notarial), summoned him to appear in this World. And now consider both what Shakspeare's Edmund, what Poet Savage, and such like, have bragged; and also that the Mirabeaus, from time immemorial, had (like a certain British kindred known to us) "produced many a blackguard, but not one blockhead"! We almost discredit that statement, which all the world whispers to itself; or, if crediting it, pause over the ruins of families. The Haarlem canal is not flatter than M. Montigny's genius. He wants the talent which seems born with all Frenchmen, that of presenting what knowledge he has in the most knowable form. One of the solidest men, too: doubtless a valuable man; whom it were so pleasant for us to praise, if we could. May he be happy in a private station, and never write more; — except for the Bureaux de Préfecture, with tolerably handsome official appointments, which is far better!

His biographical work is a monstrous quarry, or mound of shot-rubbish, in eight strata, hiding valuable matter, which he that seeks will find. Valuable, we say; for the Adopted Son having access, nay welcome and friendly entreaty, to family papers, to all manner of archives, secret records; and working therein long years, with a filial unweariedness, has made himself piously at home in all corners of the matter. He might, with the same spirit (as we always upbraidingly think), so easily have made us at home too! But no: he brings to light things new and old; now precious illustrative private documents, now the poorest public heaps of mere pamphleteer and parliamentary matter, so attainable elsewhere, often so omissible were it not to be attained; and jumbles and tumbles the whole together with such reckless clumsiness, with such endless copiousness (having wagons enough), as gives the reader many a pang. The very pains bestowed on it are often perverse; the whole is become so hard, heavy; unworkable, except in the sweat of one's brow! Or call it a mine, — artificial-natural silver-mine. Threads of beautiful silver ore lie scattered, which you must dig for, and sift: suddenly, when your thread or vein is at the richest, it vanishes (as is the way with mines) in thick masses of agglomerate and pudding-stone, no man can guess whither. This is not as it should be; and yet unfortunately it could be no other. The long bad book is so much easier to do than the brief good one; and a poor bookseller has no way of measuring and paying but by the ell, cubic or superficial. The very weaver comes and says, not "I have woven so many ells of stuff," but "so many ells of *such* stuff:" satin and Cashmere-shawl stuff, — or, if it be so, duffle and coal-sacking, and even cobweb stuff.

Undoubtedly the Adopted Son's will was good. Ought we not to rejoice greatly in the possession of these same silver-veins; and take them in the buried mineral state, or in any state; too thankful to have them now indestructible, now that they are printed? Let the world, we say, be thankful to M. Montigny, and yet know what it is they are thanking him for. No *Life of Mirabeau* is to be found in these Volumes, but the amplest materials for writing a *Life*. Were the Eight Volumes well riddled and smelted down into One Volume, such as might be made, that one were the volume! Nay it seems an enterprise of such uses, and withal so feasible, that some day it is as good as sure to be done, and again done, and finally well done.

The present reviewer, restricted to a mere article, purposes, nevertheless, to sift and extract somewhat. He has bored (so to speak) and run mine-shafts through the book in various directions, and knows pretty well what is in it, though indeed not so well where to find the same, having unfortunately (as reviewers are wont) "mislaid our paper of references"! Wherefore, if the best extracts be not presented, let not M. Lucas suffer. By one means and another, some sketch of Mirabeau's history; what befell him successively in this World, and what steps he successively took in consequence; and how he and it, working together, made the thing we call Mirabeau's Life, — may be brought out; extremely imperfect, yet truer, one can hope, than the Biographical Dictionaries and ordinary voice of rumor give it. Whether, and if so, where and how, the current estimate of Mirabeau is to be rectified, fortified, or in any important point overset and expunged, will hereby come to light, almost of itself, as we proceed. Indeed, it is very singular, considering the emphatic judgments daily uttered, in print and speech, about this man, what Egyptian obscurity rests over the mere facts of his external history; the right knowledge of which, one would fancy, must be the preliminary of any judgment, however faint. But thus, as we always urge, are such judgments generally passed: vague *plebiscita*, decrees of the common people; made up of innumerable loud empty ayes and loud empty noes; which are without meaning, and have only sound and currency: *plebiscita* needing so much revisal! — To the work, however.

One of the most valuable elements in these Eight chaotic Volumes of M. Montigny is the knowledge he communicates of Mirabeau's father; of his kindred and family, contemporary and anterior. The father, we in general knew, was Victor Riquetti, Marquis de Mirabeau, called and calling himself the *Friend of Men;* a title, for the rest, which bodes him no good in these days of ours. Accordingly one heard it added with little surprise, that this Friend of Men was the enemy of almost every man he had to do with; beginning at his own hearth, ending at the utmost circle of his acquaintance; and only beyond that, feeling himself free to love men. "The old hypocrite!" cry many, — not we. Alas, it is so much easier to love men while they exist only on paper, or quite flexible and compliant in your imagination, than to love Jack and Kit who stand there in the body, hungry, untoward; jostling you, barring you, with angular elbows, with appetites, irascibilities and a stupid will of their own! There is no doubt but old Marquis Mirabeau found it extremely difficult to get on with his brethren of mankind; and proved a crabbed, sulphurous, choleric old gentleman many a sad time: nevertheless, there is much to be set right in that matter; and M. Lucas, if one can carefully follow him, has managed to do it. Had M. Lucas but seen good to print these private letters, family documents, and more of them (for he "could make thirty octavo volumes"), in a separate state; in mere chronological order, with some small commentary of annotation; and to leave all the rest alone! — As it is, one must search and sift. Happily the old Marquis himself, in periods of leisure, or forced leisure, whereof he had many, drew up certain "unpublished memoirs" of his father and progenitors; out of which memoirs young Mirabeau also in forced leisure (still more forced, in the Castle of If!) redacted one Memoir, of a very readable sort: by the light of this latter, so far as it will last, we walk with convenience.

The Mirabeaus were Riquettis by surname, which is a slight corruption of the Italian *Arrighetti.* They came from Florence: cast out of it in some Guelph-Ghibelline quarrel, such as were common there and then, in the year 1267. Stormy times then, as now! The chronologist can remark that Dante Alighieri was a little boy, of some two years, that morning the Arrighettis had to go, and men had to say, "They are gone, these villains! They are gone, these martyrs!" the little boy listening with interest. Let the boy become a man, and he too shall have to go; and prove *come è duro calle,* and what a world this is; and have his poet-nature not killed, for it would not kill, but darkened into Old-Hebrew sternness, and sent onwards to Hades and Eternity for a home to itself. As Dame Quickly said in the Dream — "Those were rare times, Mr. Rigmarole!" — "Pretty much like our own," answered he. — In this manner did the Arrighettis (doubtless in grim Longobardic ire) scale the Alps; and become Tramontane French Riquettis; and produce, — among other things, the present Article in this Review.

It was hinted above that these Riquettis were a notable kindred; as indeed there is great likelihood, if we knew it rightly, the kindred and fathers of most notable men are. The Vaucluse fountain, that gushes out as a river, may well have run some space underground in that character, before it found vent. Nay perhaps it is not always, or often, the intrinsically greatest of a family-line that becomes the noted one, but only the best-favored of fortune. So rich here, as elsewhere, is Nature, the mighty Mother; and scatters from a single Oak-tree, as provender for pigs, what would plant the whole Planet into an oak-forest! For truly, if there were not a *mute* force in her, where were she with the speaking and exhibiting one? If under that frothy superficies of braggarts, babblers and high-sounding, richly decorated personages, that strut and fret, and preach in all times *Quam parvâ sapientiâ regatur,* there lay not some substratum of silently heroic men; working as men; with man's energy, enduring and endeavoring; invincible, who whisper not even to themselves how energetic they are?

The Riquetti family was, in some measure, defined already by analogy to that British one; as a family totally exempt from blockheads, but a little liable to produce blackguards. It took root in Provence, and bore strong southern fruit there: a restless, stormy line of men; with the wild blood running in them, and as if there had been a doom hung over them ("like the line of Atreus," Mirabeau used to say); which really there was, the wild blood itself being doom enough. How long they had stormed in Florence and elsewhere, these Riquettis, history knows not; but for the space of those five centuries, in Provence, they were never without a man to stand Riquetti-like on the earth. Men sharp of speech, prompt of stroke; men quick to discern, fierce to resolve; headlong, headstrong, strong every way; who often found the civic race-course too strait for them, and kicked against the pricks; doing this thing or the other, which the world had to animadvert upon, in various dialects, and find "clean against rule."

One Riquetti (in performance of some vow at sea, as the tradition goes) chained two mountains together: "the iron chain is still to be seen at Moustier; — it stretches from one mountain to the other, and in the middle of it there is a large star with five rays;" the supposed date is 1390. Fancy the smiths at work on *this* business! The town of Moustier is in the Basses-Alpes of Provence: whether the Riquetti chain creaks there to this hour, and lazily swags in the winds, with its "star of five rays" in the centre, and offers an uncertain perch to the sparrow, we know not. Or perhaps it was cut down in the Revolution time, when there rose such a hatred of noblesse, such a famine for iron; and made into pikes? The Adopted Son, so minute generally, ought to have mentioned, but does not. — That there was building of hospitals, endowing of convents, Chartreux, Récollets, down even to Jesuits; still more, that there was harrying and fighting, needs not be mentioned: except only that all this went on with uncommon emphasis among the Riquettis. What quarrel could there be and a Riquetti not in it? They fought much: with an eye to profit, to redress of disprofit; probably too for the art's sake.

What proved still more rational, they got footing in Marseilles as trading nobles (a kind of French Venice in those days), and took with great diligence to commerce. The family biographers are careful to say that it was in the Venetian style, however, and not ignoble. In which sense, indeed, one of their sharp-spoken ancestors, on a certain bishop's unceremoniously styling him "Jean de Riquetti, Merchant of Marseilles," made ready answer: "I am, or was, merchant of police here [first consul, an office for nobles only], as my Lord Bishop is merchant of holy-water:" let his Reverence take that. At all events, the ready-spoken proved first-rate traders; acquired their *bastide*, or mansion (white, on one of those green hills behind Marseilles), endless warehouses: acquired the lands first of this, then of that; the lands, Village, and Castle of Mirabeau on the banks of the Durance; respectable Castle of Mirabeau, "standing on its scarped rock, in the gorge of two valleys, swept by the north-wind," — very brown and melancholy-looking now! What is extremely advantageous, the old Marquis says, they had a singular talent for choosing wives; and always chose discreet valiant women; whereby the lineage was the better kept up. One grandmother, whom the Marquis himself might all but remember, was wont to say, alluding to the degeneracy of the age: "You are men? You are but manikins (*sias houmachomes*, in Provençal); we women in our time carried pistols in our girdles, and could use them too." Or fancy the Dame Mirabeau sailing stately towards the church-font; another dame striking in to take precedence of her; the Dame Mirabeau despatching this latter with a box on the ear (*soufflet*), and these words: "Here, as in the army, the baggage goes last!" Thus did the Riquettis grow, and were strong; and did exploits in their narrow arena, waiting for a wider one.

When it came to courtiership, and your field of preferment was the Versailles Œil-de-Bœuf, and a Grand Monarque walking encircled with scarlet women and adulators there, the course of the Mirabeaus grew still more complicated. They had the career of arms open, better or worse: but that was not the only one, not the main one; gold apples seemed to rain on other careers, — on that career lead bullets mostly. Observe how a Bruno, Count de Mirabeau, comports himself: — like a rhinoceros yoked in carriage-gear; his fierce forest-horn set to dangle a plume of *fleurs-de-lis*. "One day he had chased a *blue man* (it is a sort of troublesome usher at Versailles) into the very cabinet of the King, who thereupon ordered the Duke de la Feuillade to put Mirabeau under arrest. Mirabeau refused to obey; he 'would not be punished for chastising the insolence of a valet; for the rest, would go to the *dîner du roi* (king's dinner), who might then give his order himself.' He came accordingly; the King asked the Duke why he had not executed the order? The Duke was obliged to say how it stood; the King, with a goodness equal to his greatness, then said, 'It is not of to-day that we know him to be mad; one must not ruin him,'" — and the rhinoceros Bruno journeyed on.

But again, on the day when they were "inaugurating the pedestrian statue of King Louis in the Place des Victoires (a masterpiece of adulation)," the same Mirabeau, "passing along the Pont Neuf with the Guards, raised his spontoon to his shoulder before Henry the Fourth's statue, and saluting first, bawled out, 'Friends, we will salute this one; he deserves it as well as some, *Mes amis, saluons celui-ci; il en vaut bien un autre.*'" — Thus do they, the wild Riquettis, in a state of courtiership. Not otherwise, according to the proverb, do wild bulls, unexpectedly finding themselves in crockery-shops. O Riquetti kindred, into what centuries and circumstances art thou come down!

Directly prior to our old Marquis himself, the Riquetti kindred had as near as possible gone out. Jean Antoine, afterwards named Silverstock (*Col d'Argent*), had, in the earlier part of his life, been what he used to call *killed*, — of seven-and-twenty wounds in one hour. Haughtier, juster, more choleric man need not be sought for in biography. He flung gabellemen and excisemen into the river Durance (though otherwise a most dignified methodic man), when their claims were not clear; he ejected, by the like brief process, all manner of attorneys from his villages and properties; he planted vineyards, solaced peasants. He rode through France repeatedly (as the old men still remembered), with the gallantest train of outriders, on return from the wars; intimidating innkeepers and all the world, into mute prostration, into unerring promptitude, by the mere light of his eye; — withal drinking rather deep, yet never seen affected by it. He was a tall, straight man (of six feet and upwards), in mind as in body: Vendôme's "right arm" in all campaigns. Vendôme once presented him to Louis the Great, with compliments to that effect, which the splenetic Riquetti quite spoiled. Erecting his *killed* head, which needed the silver stock now to keep it straight, he said: "Yes, Sire; and had I left my fighting, and come up to court, and bribed some *catin* (scarlet woman!), I might have had my promotion and fewer wounds to-day!" The Grand King, every inch a king, instantaneously spoke of something else.

But the reader should have first seen that same killing; how twenty-seven of those unprofitable wounds were come by in one fell lot. The *Battle of Casano* has grown very obscure to most of us; and indeed Prince Eugene and Vendôme themselves grow dimmer and dimmer, as men and battles must: but, curiously enough, this small fraction of it has brightened up again to a point of history, for the time being:—

"My grandfather had foreseen that manœuvre [it is Mirabeau, the Count, not the Marquis, that reports: Prince Eugene has carried a certain bridge which the grandfather had charge of]; but he did not, as has since happened at Malplaquet and Fontenoy, commit the blunder of attacking right in the teeth a column of such weight as that. He lets them advance, hurried on by their own impetuosity and by the pressure of their rearward; and now seeing them pretty well engaged, he raised his troop (it was lying flat on the ground), and rushing on, himself at the head of them, takes the enemy in flank, cuts them in two, dashes them back, chases them over the bridge again, which they had to repass in great disorder and haste. Things brought to their old state, he resumes his post on the crown of the bridge, shelters his troop as before, which, having performed all this service under the sure deadly fire of the enemy's double lines from over the stream, had suffered a good deal. M. de Vendôme coming up, full gallop, to the attack, finds it already finished, the whole line flat on the earth, only the tall figure of the colonel standing erect! He orders him to do like the rest, not to have himself shot till the time came. His faithful servant cries to him, 'Never would I expose myself without need; I am bound to be here, but you, Monseigneur, are bound not. I answer to you for the post; but take yourself out of it, or I give it up.' The Prince (Vendôme) then orders him, in the king's name, to come down. 'Go to, the king and you: I am at my work; go you and do yours.' The good generous Prince yielded. The post was entirely untenable.

"A little afterwards my grandfather had his right arm shattered. He formed a sort of sling for it of his pocket-handkerchief, and kept his place; for there was a new attack getting ready. The right moment once come, he seizes an axe in his left hand, repeats the same manœuvre as before; again repulses the enemy, again drives him back over the bridge. But it was here that ill-fortune lay in wait for him. At the very moment while he was recalling and ranging his troop, a bullet struck him in the throat; cut asunder the tendons, the jugular vein. He sank on the bridge; the troop broke and fled. M. de Montolieu, Knight of Malta, his relative, was wounded beside him: he tore up his own shirt, and those of several others, to stanch the blood, but fainted himself by his own hurt. An old sergeant, named Laprairie, begged the aide-major of the regiment, one Guadin, a Gascon, to help and carry him off the bridge. Guadin refused, saying he was dead. The good Laprairie could only cast a camp-kettle over his colonel's head, and then run. The enemy trampled over him in torrents to profit by the disorder; the cavalry at full speed, close in the rear of the foot. M. de Vendôme, seeing his line broken, the enemy forming on this side the stream, and consequently the bridge lost, exclaimed, 'Ah! Mirabeau *is dead*, then;' a eulogy forever dear and memorable to us."

How nearly, at this moment, it was all over with the Mirabeaus; how, but for the cast of an insignificant camp kettle, there had not only been no Article *Mirabeau* in this Review, but no French Revolution, or a very different one and all Europe had found itself in far other latitudes at this hour, any one who has a turn for such things may easily reflect. Nay, without great difficulty he may reflect farther, that not only the French Revolution and this Article, but all revolutions, articles and achievements whatsoever, the greatest and the smallest, which this world ever beheld, have not once, but often, in their course of genesis, depended on the veriest trifles, castings of camp-kettles, turnings of straws; except only that we do not *see* that course of theirs. So inscrutable is genetic history; impracticable the theory of causation, and transcends all calculus of man's devising! Thou thyself, O Reader (who art an achievement of importance), over what hair's-breadth bridges of Accident, through yawning perils, and the man-devouring gulf of Centuries, hast thou got safe hither, — from Adam all the way!

Be this as it can, *Col d'Argent* came alive again, by "miracle of surgery;" and, holding his head up by means of a silver stock, walked this earth many long days, with respectability, with fiery intrepidity and spleen; did many notable things: among others, produced, in dignified wedlock, Mirabeau the Friend of Men; who again produced Mirabeau the Swallower of Formulas; from which latter, and the wondrous blazing funeral-pyre he made for himself, there finally goes forth a light, whereby those old Riquetti destinies, and many a strange old hidden thing, become noticeable.

But perhaps in the whole Riquetti kindred there is not a stranger figure than this very Friend of Men; at whom, in the order of time, we have now arrived. That Riquetti who chained the mountains together, and hung up the star with five rays to sway and bob there, was but a type of him. Strong, tough as the oak-root, and as gnarled and unwedgeable; no fibre of him running straight with the other; a block for Destiny to beat on, for the world to gaze at, with ineffectual wonder! Really a most notable, questionable, hatable, lovable old Marquis. How little, amid such jingling triviality of Literature, *Philosophie* and the pretentious cackle of innumerable Baron Grimms, with their correspondence and self-proclamation, one could fancy that France held in it such a Nature-product as the Friend of Men! Why, there is substance enough in this one Marquis to fit out whole armies of *Philosophes*, were it properly attenuated. So many poor Thomases perorate and have *éloges*, poor Morellets speculate, Marmontels moralize in rose-pink manner, Diderots become possessed of encyclopedical heads, and lean Carons de Beaumarchais fly abroad on the wings of *Figaros;* and this brave old Marquis has been hid under a bushel! He was a Writer, too; and had talents for it (certain of the talents), such as few Frenchmen have had since the days of Montaigne. It skilled not: he, being unwedgeable, has remained in antiquarian cabinets; the others, splitting up so readily, are the ware you find on all market-stalls, much prized (say as brimstone Lucifers, "*light*-bringers" so called) by the generality. Such is the world's way. And yet complain not; this rich, unwedgeable old Marquis, have we not him too at last, and can keep him all the longer than the Thomases?

The great Mirabeau used to say always that his father had the greater gifts of the two; which surely is saying something. Not that you can subscribe to it in the full sense, but that in a very wide sense you can. So far as mere speculative head goes, Mirabeau is probably right. Looking at the old Marquis as a speculative thinker and utterer of his thought, and with what rich coloring of originality he gives it forth, you pronounce him to be superior, or even say supreme in his time; for the genius of him almost rises to the poetic. Do our readers know the German Jean Paul, and his style of thought? Singular to say, the old Marquis has a quality in him resembling afar off that of Paul; and actually works it out in his French manner, far as the French manner can. Nevertheless intellect is not of the speculative head only; the great end of intellect surely is, that it make one *see* something: for which latter result the whole man must co-operate. In the old Marquis there dwells withal a crabbedness, stiff cross-grained humor, a latent fury and fuliginosity, very perverting; which stiff crabbedness, with its pride, obstinacy, affectation, what else is it at bottom but *want* of strength? The real quantity of our insight, — how justly and thoroughly we shall comprehend the nature of a thing, especially of a human thing, — depends on our patience, our fairness, lovingness, what strength soever we have: intellect comes from the whole man, as it is the light that enlightens the whole man. In this true sense, the younger Mirabeau, with that great flashing eyesight of his, that broad, fearless freedom of nature he had, was very clearly the superior man.

At bottom, perhaps, the main definition you could give of old Marquis Mirabeau is, that he was of the Pedant species. Stiff as brass, in all senses; unsympathizing, uncomplying; of an endless, unfathomable pride, which cloaks but does nowise extinguish an endless vanity and need of shining: stately, euphuistic mannerism enveloping the thought, the morality, the whole being of the man. A solemn, high-stalking man; with such a fund of indignation in him, or of latent indignation; of contumacity, irrefragability; — who (after long experiment) accordingly looks forth on mankind and this world of theirs with some dull-snuffling word of forgiveness, of contemptuous acquittal; or oftenest with clenched lips (nostrils slightly dilated), in expressive silence. Here is pedantry; but then pedantry under the most interesting new circumstances; and withal carried to such a pitch as becomes sublime, one might almost say transcendental.

Consider, indeed, whether Marquis Mirabeau could be a pedant, as your common Scaligers and Scioppiuses are! His arena is not a closet with Greek manuscripts, but the wide world and Friendship to Humanity. Does not the blood of all the Mirabeaus circulate in his honorable veins? He too would do somewhat to raise higher that high house; and yet, alas, it is plain to him that the house is sinking; that much is sinking. The Mirabeaus, and above all others this Mirabeau, are fallen on evil times. It has not escaped the old Marquis how Nobility is now decayed, nearly ruinous; based no longer on heroic nobleness of conduct and effort, but on sycophancy, formality, adroitness; on Parchments, Tailor's trimmings, Prunella and Coach-leather: on which latter basis, unless his whole insight into Heaven's ways with Earth have misled him, no institution in this god-governed world can pretend to continue. Alas, and the priest has now no tongue but for plate-licking; and the tax-gatherer squeezes; and the strumpetocracy sits at its ease in high-cushioned lordliness, under baldachins and cloth-of-gold: till now at last, what with one fiction, what with another (and veridical Nature dishonoring all manner of fictions, and refusing to pay realities for them), it has come so far that the Twenty-five millions, long scarce of knowledge, of virtue, happiness, cash, are now fallen scarce of food to eat; and do not, with that natural ferocity of theirs which Nature has still left them, feel the disposition to die starved; and all things are nodding towards chaos, and no man layeth it to heart! One man exists who might perhaps stay or avert the catastrophe, were he called to the helm: the Marquis Mirabeau. His high ancient blood, his heroic love of truth, his strength of heart, his loyalty and profound insight (for you cannot hear him speak without detecting the man of genius), this, with the appalling predicament things have come to, might give him claims. From time to time, at long intervals, such a thought does flit, portentous, through the brain of the Marquis. But ah! in these scandalous days, how shall the proudest of the Mirabeaus fall prostrate before a Pompadour? Can the Friend of Men hoist, with good hope, as his battle-standard, the furbelow of an unmentionable woman? No; not hanging by the apron-strings of such a one will this Mirabeau rise to the premiership; but summoned by France in her day of need, in her day of vision, or else not at all. France does not summon; the *else* goes its road.

Marquis Mirabeau tried Literature too, as we said; and with no inconsiderable talent; nay, with first-rate talents in some sort: but neither did this prosper. His *Ecce signum*, in such era of downfall and all-darkening ruin, was Political Economy; and a certain man, whom he called "the Master,"—that is, Dr. Quesnay. Round this Master (whom the Marquis succeeded as Master himself) he and some other idolaters did idolatrously gather: to publish books and tracts, periodical literature, proclamation by word and deed,—if so were, the world's dull ear might be opened to salvation. The world's dull ear continued shut. In vain preached this apostle and that other, simultaneously or in Melibœan sequence, in literature, periodical and stationary; in vain preached Marquis Mirabeau in his *Ami des Hommes*, number after number, through long volumes,

— though really in a most eloquent manner. Marquis Mirabeau had the indisputablest ideas; but then his style! In very truth, it is the strangest of styles, though one of the richest: a style full of originality, picturesqueness, sunny vigor; but all eased and slated over, threefold, in metaphor and trope; distracted into tortuosities, dislocations; starting out into crotchets, cramp turns, quaintnesses, and hidden satire; which the French head had no ear for. Strong meat, too tough for babes! The Friend of Men found warm partisans, widely scattered over this Earth; and had censer-fumes transmitted him from marquises, nay from kings and principalities, over seas and alpine chains of mountains; whereby the pride and latent indignation of the man were only fostered: but at home, with the million all jigging each after its suitable scrannel-pipe, he could see himself make no way, — if it were not way towards being a monstrosity, and thing men wanted "to see:" not the right thing!

Neither through the press, then, is there progress towards the premiership? The staggering state of French statesmen must even stagger whither it is bound. A light Public froths itself into tempest about Palissot and his comedy of *Les Philosophes*, — about Gluck-Piccini Music; neglecting the call of Ruin; and hard must come to hard. Thou, O Friend of Men, clench thy lips together, and wait; silent as the old rocks. Our Friend of Men did so, or better; not wanting to himself, the lion-hearted old Marquis! For his latent indignation has a certain devoutness in it; is a kind of holy indignation. The Marquis, though he knows the *Encyclopédie*, has not forgotten the higher Sacred Books, or that there is a God in this world, — very different from the French *Être Suprême*. He even professes, or tries to profess, a kind of diluted Catholicism, in his own way, and thus turn an eye towards heaven: very singular in his attitude here too. Thus it would appear this world is a mad imbroglio, which no Friend of Men can set right: it shall go wrong, then, in God's name; and the staggering state of all things stagger whither it can. To deep, fearful depths, — not to bottomless ones!

But in the Family Circle? There surely a man, and friend of men, is supreme; and, ruling with wise autocracy, may make something of it. Alas, in the family circle it went not better, but worse! The Mirabeaus had once a talent for choosing wives: had it deserted them in this instance, then, when most needed? We say not so: we say only that Madame la Marquise had human free-will in her too; that all the young Mirabeaus were likely to have human free-will in great plenty; that within doors as without the Devil is busy. Most unsuccessful is the Marquis as ruler of men: his family kingdom, for the most part, little otherwise than in a state of mutiny. A sceptre as of Rhadamanthus will sway and drill that household into perfection of Harrison Clockwork; and cannot do it. The royal ukase goes forth in its calm irrefragable justice; meets hesitation, disobedience open or concealed. Reprimand is followed by remonstrance; harsh coming thunder mutters, growl answering growl. With unaffectedly astonished eye the Marquis appeals to Destiny and Heaven; explodes, since he needs must then, in red lightning of paternal authority. How it went, or who by forethought might be to blame, one knows not; for the *Fils Adoptif*, hemmed in by still extant relations, is extremely reticent on these points: a certain Dame de Pailly, "from Switzerland, very beautiful and very artful," glides half-seen through the Mirabeau household (the Marquis's Orthodoxy, as we said, being but of the diluted kind): there are eavesdroppers, confidential servants; there are Pride, Anger, Uncharitableness, Sublime Pedantry, and the Devil always busy. Such a figure as Pailly, of herself, bodes good to no one.

Enough, there are Lawsuits, *Lettres de Cachet;* on all hands *peine forte et dure.* Lawsuits, long drawn out, before gaping *Parlements*, between man and wife: to the scandal of an unrighteous world; how much more of a righteous Marquis, minded once to be an example to it! *Lettres de Cachet*, to the number, as some count, of fifty-four, first and last, for the use of a single Marquis: at times the whole Mirabeau fireside is seen empty, except Pailly and Marquis; each individual sitting in his separate Strong-house, there to bethink himself. Stiff are your tempers, ye young Mirabeaus; not stiffer than mine the old one's! What pangs it has cost the fond paternal heart to go through all this Brutus duty, the Marquis knows, and Heaven. In a less degree, what pangs it may cost the filial heart to go *under* (or undergo) the same! The former set of pangs he, aided by Heaven, crushes down into his soul suppressively, as beseems a man and Mirabeau: the latter set, — are they not self-sought pangs; medicinal; which will cease of their own accord, when the unparalleled filial impiety pleases to cease? For the rest, looking at such a world and such a family, at these prison-houses, mountains of divorce-papers, and the staggering state of French statesmen, a Friend of Men may pretty naturally ask himself, Am not I a strong old Marquis, then, whom all this has not driven into Bedlam, — not into hypochondria, dyspepsia even? The Heavens are bounteous, and make the back equal to the burden.

Out of all which circumstances, and of such struggle against them, there has come forth this Marquis de Mirabeau, shaped (it was the shape *he* could arrive at) into one of the most singular Sublime Pedants that ever stepped the soil of France. Solemn moral rigor, as of some antique Presbyterian Ruling Elder: heavy breadth, dull heat, choler and pride as of an old "Bozzy of Auchinleck;" then a high-flown euphuistic courtesy, the airiest mincing ways, suitable to your French Seigneur! How the two divine missions, for both seem to him divine, of Riquetti and Man of Genius or World-schoolmaster, blend themselves; and philosophism, chivalrous euphuism, presbyterian ruling-elderism, all in such strength, have met, to give the world assurance of a man! There never entered the brain of Hogarth, or of rare old Ben, such a piece of Humor (high meeting with low, and laughter with tears) as, in this brave old Riquetti, Nature has presented us ready-made.

For withal there is such genius in him; rich depth of character; indestructible cheerfulness and health breaking out, in spite of these divorce-papers, ever and anon, — like strong sunlight in thundery weather. We have heard of the "strife of Fate with Free-will" producing Greek Tragedies, but never heard it till now produce such astonishing comico-tragical French Farces. Blessed old Marquis, — or else accursed! He is there, with his broad bull-brow; with the huge cheek-bones; those deep eyes, glazed as in weariness; the lower visage puckered into a simpering graciosity, which would pass itself off for a kind of smile. What to do with him? Welcome, thou tough old Marquis, with thy better and thy worse! There is stuff in thee (very different from moonshine and formula); and stuff is stuff, were it never so crabbed.

Besides the old Marquis de Mirabeau, there is a Brother, the Bailli de Mirabeau: a man who, serving as Knight of Malta, governing in Guadaloupe, fighting and doing hard sea-duty, has sown his wild oats long since; and settled down here, in the old "Castle of Mirabeau on its sheer rock" (for the Marquis usually lives at Bignon, another estate within reach of Paris), into one of the worthiest quiet uncles and house-friends. It is very beautiful, this mild strength, mild clearness and justice of the brave Bailli, in contrast with his brother's nodosity; whom he comforts, defends, admonishes, even rebukes; and on the whole reverences, both as head Riquetti and as World-schoolmaster, beyond all living men. The frank true love of these two brothers is the fairest feature in Mirabeaudom; indeed the only feature which is always fair. Letters pass continually: in letter and extract we here, from time to time, witness (in these Eight chaotic Volumes) the various personages speak their dialogue, unfold their farce-tragedy. The *Fils Adoptif* admits mankind into this strange household; though stingily, uncomfortably, and all in darkness, save for his own capricious dark-lantern. Seen or half-seen, it is a stage; as the whole world is. What with personages, what with destinies, no stranger house-drama was enacting on the Earth at that time.

Under such auspices, which were not yet ripened into events and fatalities, but yet were inevitably ripening towards such, did Gabriel Honoré, at the Mansion of Bignon, between Sens and Nemours, on the 9th day of March, 1749, first see the light. He was the fifth child; the second male child; yet born heir, the first having died in the cradle. A magnificent "enormous" fellow, as the gossips had to admit, almost with terror; the head especially great; "two grinders" in it, already shot! — Rough-hewn truly, yet with bulk, with limbs, vigor bidding fair to do honor to the line. The paternal Marquis, to whom they said, "*N'ayez pas peur,* Don't be frightened," gazed joyful, we can fancy, and not fearful, on this product of his; the stiff pedant features relaxing into a veritable smile. Smile, O paternal Marquis: the future indeed "veils sorrow and joy," one knows not in what proportion; but here is a new Riquetti, whom the gods send; with the rudiments in him, thou wouldst guess, of a very Hercules, fit for Twelve Labors, which surely are themselves the best joys. Look at the oaf, how he sprawls. No stranger Riquetti ever sprawled under our Sun: it is as if, in this thy man-child, Destiny had swept together all the wildnesses and strengths of the Riquetti lineage, and flung him forth as her finale in that kind. Not without a vocation! He is the last of the Riquettis; and shall do work long memorable among mortals.

Truly, looking now into the matter, we might say, in spite of the gossips, that on this whole Planet, in those years, there was hardly born such a man-child as this same, in the "Mansion-house of Bignon, not far from Paris," whom they named Gabriel Honoré. Nowhere, we say, came there a stouter or braver into this Earth; whither they come marching by the legion and the myriad, out of Eternity and Night! — Except, indeed, what is notable enough, one other that arrived some few months later, at the town of Frankfort-on-Mayn, and got christened *Johann Wolfgang Goethe.* Then again, in some ten years more, there came another, still liker Gabriel Honoré in his brawny ways. It was into a mean hut that this one came, an infirm hut (which the wind blew down at the time), in the shire of Ayr, in Scotland: him they named *Robert Burns.* These, in that epoch, were the Well-born of the World; by whom the world's history was to be carried on. Ah, could the well-born of the world be always rightly bred, rightly entreated there, what a world were it! But it is not so; it is the reverse of so. And then few, like that Frankfort one, can peaceably vanquish the world, with its black imbroglios; and shine above it, in serene help to it, like a sun!

The most can but *Titanically* vanquish it, or be vanquished by it: hence, instead of light (stillest and strongest of things), we have but lightning; red fire, and oftentimes conflagrations, which are very woful.

Be that as it might, Marquis Mirabeau determined to give his son, and heir of all the Riquettis, such an education as no Riquetti had yet been privileged with. Being a world-schoolmaster (and indeed a *Martinus Scriblerus*, as we here find, more ways than one), this was not strange in him; but the results were very lamentable. Considering the matter now, at this impartial distance, you are lost in wonder at the good Marquis; know not whether to laugh at him, or weep over him; and on the whole are bound to do both. A more sufficient product of Nature than this "enormous Gabriel," as we said, need not have been wished for: "beating his nurse," but then loving her, and loving the whole world; of large desire, truly, but desire towards *all* things, the highest and the lowest: in other words, a large mass of *life* in him, a large man waiting there! Does he not rummage (the rough cub, now tenfold rougher by the effect of small-pox) in all places, seeking something to know; dive down to the most unheard-of recesses for papers to read? Does he not, spontaneously, give his hat to a peasant-boy whose head-gear was defective? He writes the most sagacious things in his fifth year, extempore, at table; setting forth what "*Monsieur Moi*, Mr. Me," is bound to do. A rough strong genuine soul, of the frankest open temper; full of loving fire and strength; looking out so brisk with his clear hazel eyes, with his brisk sturdy bulk, what might not fair breeding have done for him! On so many occasions, one feels as if he needed nothing in the world but to be well let alone.

But no; the scientific paternal hand must interfere, at every turn, to assist Nature: the young lion's-whelp has to grow up all bestrapped, bemuzzled in the most extraordinary manner: shall wax and unfold himself by theory of education, by square and rule, — going punctual, all the way, like Harrison Clockwork, according to the theoretic program; or *else* —! O Marquis, World-schoolmaster, what theory of education is this?

No lion's-whelp or young Mirabeau will go like clockwork, but far otherwise. "He that spareth the rod hateth the child;" that on its side is true: and yet Nature too is strong: "Nature will come running back, though thou expel her with a fork!" In one point of view there is nothing more Hogarthian comic than this long Peter Peebles' *ganging plea* of "Marquis Mirabeau *versus* Nature and others:" yet in a deeper point of view it is but too serious. Candid history will say, that whatsoever of worst it was in the power of art to do against this young Gabriel Honoré, was done. Not with unkind intentions; nay, with intentions which, at least, began in kindness. How much better was Burns's education (though this too went on under the grimmest pressures), on the wild hill-side, by the brave peasant's hearth, with no theory of education at all, but poverty, toil, tempest and the handles of the plough!

At bottom, the Marquis's wish and purpose was not complex, but simple. That Gabriel Honoré de Riquetti shall become the very same man that Victor de Riquetti is; perfect as he is perfect: this will satisfy the fond father's heart, and nothing short of this. Better exemplar, truly, were hard to find; and yet, O Victor de Riquetti, poor Gabriel, on his side, wishes to be Gabriel and not Victor! Stiffer loving Pedant never had a more elastic loving Pupil. Offences (of mere *elasticity*, mere natural springing up, for most part) accumulate by addition: Madame Pailly and the confidential servants, on this as on all matters, are busy. The household itself is darkening, the mistress of it gone; the Lawsuits, and by and by Divorce-Lawsuits, have begun. Worse will grow worse, and ever worse, till Rhadamanthus Scriblerus Marquis de Mirabeau, swaying vainly the sceptre of order, see himself environed by a waste chaos as of Bedlam. Stiff is he; elastic, and yet still loving, reverent, is his son and pupil. Thus cruelty, and yearnings that must be suppressed; indignant revolt, and hot tears of penitence, alternate, in the strangest way, between the two; and for long years our young Alcides has, by Destiny, his own Demon and Juno de Pailly, Labors enough imposed on him.

But, to judge what a task was set this poor paternal Marquis, let us listen to the following successive utterances from him;

which he emits, in letter after letter, mostly into the ear of his brother the good Bailli. Cluck, cluck, — is it not as the sound of an agitated parent-fowl, now in terror, now in anger, at the brood it has brought out?

"This creature promises to be a very pretty subject." "Talent in plenty, and cleverness, but more faults still inherent in the substance of him." "Only just come into life, and the extravasation (*extravasement*) of the thing already visible! A spirit cross-grained, fantastic, iracund, incompatible, tending towards evil before knowing it, or being capable of it." "A high heart under the jacket of a boy; it has a strange instinct of pride this creature; noble withal; the embryo of a shaggy-headed bully and killcow, that would swallow all the world, and is not twelve years old yet." "A type, profoundly inconceivable, of baseness, sheer dull grossness (*platitude absolue*), and the quality of your dirty, rough-crusted caterpillar, that will never uncrust itself or fly." "An intelligence, a memory, a capacity, that strike you, that astonish, that frighten you." "A nothing bedizened with crotchets. May fling dust in the eyes of silly women, but will never be the fourth part of a man, if by good luck he be anything." "One whom you may call ill-born, this elder lad of mine; who bodes, at least hitherto, as if he could become nothing but a madman: almost invincibly maniac, with all the vile qualities of the maternal stock over and above. As he has a great many masters, and all, from the confessor to the comrade, are so many reporters for me, I see the nature of the beast, and don't think we shall ever do any good with him."

In a word, offences (of elasticity or expansivity) have accumulated to such height in the lad's fifteenth year, that there is a determination taken, on the part of Rhadamanthus Scriblerus, to pack him out of doors, one way or the other. After various plannings, the plan of one Abbé Choquenard's Boarding-school is fallen upon: the rebellious Expansive shall to Paris; there, under ferula and short-commons, contract himself and consider. Farther, as the name Mirabeau is honorable and right honorable, he shall not have the honor of it; never again, but be called *Pierre Buffière*, till his ways decidedly alter. This *Pierre Buffière* was the name of an estate of his mother's in the Limousin: sad fuel of those smoking lawsuits which at length blazed out as divorce-lawsuits. Wearing this melancholy nickname of Peter Buffière, as a perpetual badge, had poor Gabriel Honoré to go about for a number of years; like a misbehaved soldier with his eyebrows shaven off; alas, only a fifteen-years recruit yet, too young for that!

Nevertheless, named or shorn of his name, Peter or Gabriel, the youth himself was still there. At Choquenard's Boarding-school, as always afterwards in life, he carries with him, he unfolds and employs, the qualities which Nature gave, which no shearing or shaving of art and mistreatment could take away. The *Fils Adoptif* gives a grand list of studies followed, acquisitions made: ancient languages ("and we have a thousand proofs of his indefatigable tenacity in this respect"); modern languages, English, Italian, German, Spanish; then "passionate study of mathematics;" design, pictorial and geometrical; music, so as to read it at sight, nay to compose in it; singing, to a high degree; "equitation, fencing, dancing, swimming and tennis:" if only the half of which were true, can we say that Pierre Buffière spent his time ill?

What is more precisely certain, the disgraced Buffière worked his way very soon into the good affections of all and sundry, in this House of Discipline, who came in contact with him; school-fellows, teachers, the Abbé Choquenard himself. For, said the paternal Marquis, he has the tongue of the Old Serpent! In fact, it is very notable how poor Buffière, Comte de Mirabeau, revolutionary King Riquetti, or whatever else they might call him, let him come, under what discommendation he might, into any circle of men, was sure to make them his ere long. To the last, no man could look into him with his own eyes, and continue to hate him. He could talk men *over*, then! Yes, O Reader: and he could *act* men over: for, at bottom, that was it. The large open soul of the man, purposing deliberately no paltry, unkindly or dishonest thing towards any creature, was felt to be withal a *brother's* soul. Defaced by black drossy obscurations very many; but yet shining out, lustrous, warm; in its troublous effulgence, great!

That a man be loved the better by men the nearer they come to him: is not this the fact of all facts? To know what extent of prudential diplomacy (good, indifferent and even bad) a man has, ask public opinion, journalistic rumor, or at most the persons he dines with: to know what of real worth is in him, ask infinitely deeper and farther; ask, first of all, those who have tried by experiment; who, were they the foolishest people, can answer pertinently here if anywhere. "Those at a distance esteem of me a little worse than I; those near at hand a little better than I:" so said the good Sir Thomas Browne; so will all men say who have much to say on that.

The Choquenard Military Boarding-school having, if not fulfilled its function, yet ceased to be a house of penance, and failed of its function, Marquis Mirabeau determined to try the Army. Nay, it would seem, the wicked mother has been privily sending him money; which he, the traitor, has accepted! To the Army, therefore. And so Pierre Buffière has a basnet on his big head; the shaggy pock-pitted visage looks martially from under horse-hair and clear metal; he dresses rank, with tight bridle-hand and drawn falchion, in the town of Saintes, as a bold volunteer dragoon. His age was but eighteen as yet and some months.

The people of Saintes grew to like him amazingly; would even "have lent him money to any extent." His Colonel, one De Lambert, proved to be a martinet, of sharp sour temper: the shaggy visage of Buffière, radiant through its seaminess with several things, had not altogether the happiness to content him. Furthermore there was an *Archer* (Bailiff) at Saintes, who had a daughter: she, foolish minx, liked the Buffière visage *better* even than the Colonel's! For one can fancy what a pleader Buffière was, in this great cause; with the tongue of the Old Serpent. It was his first *amourette;* plainly triumphant; the beginning of a quite unheard-of career in that kind. The aggrieved Colonel emitted "satires" through the mess-rooms; this bold volunteer dragoon was not the man to give him worse than he brought: matters fell into a very unsatisfactory state between them. To crown the whole, Buffière went one evening (contrary to wont, now and always) to the gaming-table, and lost four *louis*. Insubordination, gambling, Archer's daughter! Rhadamanthus thunders from Bignon: Buffière doffs his basnet, flies covertly to Paris. Negotiation there now was; confidential spy to Saintes; correspondence, fulmination; Dupont de Nemours as daysman between a Colonel and a Marquis, both in high wrath, — Buffière to pay the piper! Confidential spy takes evidence; the whole atrocity comes to light: what wilt thou do, O Marquis, with this devil's-child of thine? Send him to Surinam; let the Tropical heats and rains tame the hot liver of him! — so whispered paternal Brutus'-justice and Dame Pailly; but milder thoughts prevailed. *Lettre de Cachet* and the Isle of Rhé shall be tried first. Thither fares poor Buffière; not with Archer's daughters, but with Archers; amid the dull rustle and autumnal brown of the falling leaves of 1768, his nineteenth autumn. It is his second Hercules' Labor; the Choquenard Boarding-house was the first. Bemoaned by the loud Atlantic he shall sit there, in winter season, under ward of a Bailli d'Aulan, governor of the place, and said to be a very Cerberus.

At Rhé the old game is played: in few weeks, the Cerberus Bailli is Buffière's; baying, out of all his throats, in Buffière's behalf! What "sorcery" is this that the rebellious prodigy has in him, O Marquis? Hypocrisy, cozenage, which no governor of strong places can resist? Nothing short of the hot swamps of Surinam will hold him quiet, then? Happily there is fighting in Corsica; Paoli fighting on his last legs there; and Baron de Vaux wants fresh troops against him. Buffière, though he likes not the cause, will go thither gladly; and fight his very best: how happy if, by any fighting, he can conquer back his baptismal name, and some gleam of paternal tolerance! After much soliciting, his prayer is acceded to: Buffière, with the rank now of "Sublieutenant of Foot, in the Legion of Lorraine," gets across the country to Toulon, in the month of April; and enters "on the plain which furrows itself without plough" (euphuistic for *ocean*): "God grant he may not have to row there one day," — in red cap, as convict galleyslave! Such is the paternal benediction and prayer; which was realized. Nay, Buffière, it would seem, before quitting Rochelle, indeed "hardly yet two hours out of the fortress of Rhé," had fallen into a new atrocity, — his first duel; a certain quondam messmate (discharged for swindling) having claimed acquaintance with him on the streets; which claim Buffière saw good to refuse; and even to resist, when demanded at the sword's point! The "Corsican Buccaneer, *flibustier Corse*," that he is!

The Corsican Buccaneer did, as usual, a giant's or two giants' work in Corsica; fighting, writing, loving; "eight hours a day of study;" and gained golden opinions from all manner of men and women. It was his own notion that Nature had meant him for a soldier; he felt so equable and at home in that business, — the wreck of discordant death-tumult, and roar of cannon, serving as a fine regulatory marching-music for him. Doubtless Nature meant him for a Man of Action; as she means all great souls that have a strong body to dwell in: but Nature will adjust herself to much. In the course of twelve months, in May, 1770, Buffière gets back to Toulon; with much manuscript in his pocket; his head full of military and all other lore, "like a library turned topsy-turvy;" his character much risen, as we said, with every one. The brave Bailli Mirabeau, though almost against principle, cannot refuse to see a chief nephew, as he passes so near the old Castle on the Durance: the good uncle is charmed with him; finds, "under features terribly seamed and altered from what they were," bodily and mentally all that is royal and strong, nay "an expression of something refined, something gracious;" declares him, after several days of incessant talk, to be the best fellow on earth if well dealt with, "who will shape into statesman, generalissimo, pope, what thou pleasest to desire!" Or, shall we give poor Buffière's testimonial in mess-room dialect; in its native twanging vociferosity, and garnished with old oaths, — which, alas, have become for us almost old prayers now, — the vociferous Moustachio-figures whom they twanged through having all vanished so long since: "*Morbleu, Monsieur l'Abbé; c'est un garçon diablement vif; mais c'est un bon garçon,* *qui a de l'esprit comme trois cent mille diables; et parbleu, un homme très brave.*"

Moved by all manner of testimonials and entreaties from uncle and family, the rigid Marquis consents, not without difficulty, to see this anomalous Peter Buffière of his; and then, after solemn deliberation, even to un-Peter him, and give him back his name. It was in September that they met; at Aiguesperse, in the Limousin near the *lands* of *Pierre Buffière.* Soft ruth comes stealing through the Rhadamanthine heart; tremblings of faint hope even, which, however, must veil itself in austerity and rigidity. The Marquis writes: "I perorate him very much;" observe "my man, how he droops his nose, and looks fixedly, a sign that he is reflecting; or whirls away his head, hiding a tear: serious, now mild, now severe, we give it him alternately; it is thus I manage the mouth of this fiery animal." Had he but read the *Ephémérides,* the *Economiques,* the *Précis des Elémens* ("the most labored book I have done, though I wrote it in such health"); had he but got grounded in my Political Economy! Which, however, he does not take to with any heart. On the contrary, he unhappily finds it hollow, pragmatical, a barren jingle of formulas; pedantic even; unnutritive as the east-wind. Blasphemous words; which (or the like of them) any eavesdropper has but to report to "the Master"! — And yet, after all, is it not a brave Gabriel this rough-built young Hercules; and has finished handsomely his Second Labor? The head of the fellow is "a wind-mill and fire-mill of ideas." The War-office makes him captain, and he is passionate for following soldiership: but then, unluckily, your Alexander needs such tools; a whole world for workshop! "Where are the armies and herring-shoals of men to come from? Does he think I have money," snuffles the old Marquis, "to get him up battles like Harlequin and Scaramouch?" The fool! he shall settle down into rurality; first, however, though it is a risk, see a little of Paris.

At Paris, through winter, the brave Gabriel carries all before him; shines in saloons, in the Versailles Œil-de-Bœuf; dines with your Duke of Orleans (young Chartres, not yet become *Égalité,* hob-nobbing with him); dines with your Guéménés, Broglies, and mere Grandeurs; and is invited to hunt. Even the old women are charmed with him, and rustle in their satins: such a light has not risen in the Œil-de-Bœuf for some while. Grant, O Marquis, that there are worse sad-dogs than this. The Marquis grants partially; and yet, and yet! Few things are notabler than these successive surveys by the old Marquis, critically scanning his young Count: —

"I am on my guard; remembering how vivacity of head may deceive you as to a character of morass (*de tourbe*): but, all considered, one must give him store of exercise; what the devil else to do with such exuberance, intellectual and sanguineous? I know no woman but the Empress of Russia with whom this man were good to marry yet." "Hard to find a dog (*drôle*) that had more talent and action in the head of him than this; he would reduce the devil to terms." "Thy nephew Whirlwind (*l'Ouragan*) assists me; yesterday the Valet Luce, who is a sort of privileged simpleton, said pleasantly, 'Confess, M. le Comte, a man's body is very unhappy to carry a head like that.'" "The *terrible gift of familiarity* (as Pope Gregory called it)! He turns the great people here round his finger."

Or again, though all this is some years afterwards: "They have never done telling me that he is easy to set a-rearing; that you cannot speak to him reproachfully but his eyes, his lips, his color testify that all is *giving way;* on the other hand, the smallest word of tenderness will make him burst into tears, and he would fling himself into the fire for you." "I pass my life in cramming him (*à le bourrer*) with principles, with all that I know; for this man, ever the same as to his fundamental properties, has done nothing by these long and solid studies but augment the rubbish-heap in his head, which is a library turned topsy-turvy; and then his talent for dazzling by superficials, for he has *snuffed up all formulas*, and cannot substantiate anything." "A wicker-basket, that lets all through; disorder born; credulous as a nurse; indiscreet; a liar [kind of white liar], by exaggeration, affirmation, effrontery, without need, and merely to tell histories; a confidence that dazzles you on everything: cleverness and talent without limit. For the rest, the vices have infinitely less root in him than the virtues; all is facility, impetuosity, ineffectuality (not for want of fire, but of plan); wrong-spun, ravelled (*défaufilé*) in character: a mind that meditates in the vague, and builds of soap-bells." "Spite of the bitter ugliness, the intercadent step, the trenchant breathless blown-up precipitation, and the look, or, to say better, the atrocious eyebrow of this man when he listens and reflects, something told me that it was all but a scarecrow of old cloth, this ferocious outward garniture of his; that, at bottom, here was perhaps the man in all France least capable of deliberate wickedness." "Pie and jay by instinct." "Wholly reflex and reverberance (*tout de reflet et de réverbère*); drawn to the right by his heart, to the left by his head, which he carries four paces from him." "May become the Coryphæus of the Time." "A blinkard (*myope*) precipitancy, born with him, which makes him take the quagmire for firm earth —"

— Cluck, cluck, — in the name of all the gods, what prodigy is this I have hatched? Web-footed, broad-billed; which will run and drown itself, if Mercy and the parent-fowl prevent not!

How inexpressibly true, meanwhile, is this that the old Marquis says: "He has snuffed up all formulas (*il a humé toutes les formules*)," and made away with them! Formulas, indeed, if we think of it, Formulas and Gabriel Honoré had been, and were to be, at death-feud from first to last. What formula of this formalized (established) world had been a kind one to Gabriel? His soul could find no shelter in them, they were unbelievable; his body no solacement, they were tyrannical, unfair. If there were not pabulum and substance beyond formulas, and in spite of them, then woe to him! To this man formulas would yield no existence or habitation, if it were not in the Isle of Rhé and such places; but threatened to choke the life out of him: either formulas or he must go to the wall; and so, after a tough fight, *they*, as it proves, will go. So cunningly thrifty is Destiny; and is quietly shaping her tools for the work they are to do, whilst she seems but spoiling and breaking them! For, consider, O Marquis, whether France herself will not by and by have to swallow a formula or two? This sight thou lookest on from the baths of Mount d'Or, does it not bode something of that kind? A summer day in the year 1777: —

"O Madame! the narrations I would give you, if I had not a score of letters to answer, on dull sad business! I would paint to you the votive feast of this town, which took place on the 14th. The savages descending in torrents from the Mountains, — our people ordered not to stir out. The curate with surplice and stole; public justice in periwig; *maréchaussée*, sabre in hand, guarding the place, before the bagpipes were permitted to begin. The dance interrupted, a quarter of an hour after, by battle; the cries and fierce hissings of the children, of the infirm, and other on-lookers, ogling it, tarring it on, as the mob does when dogs fight. Frightful men, or rather wild creatures of the forest, in coarse woollen jupes, and broad girths of leather studded with copper nails; of gigantic stature, heightened by the high sabots; rising still higher on tiptoe, to look at the battle; beating time to it; rubbing their sides with their elbows: their face haggard, covered with their long greasy hair; top of the visage waxing pale, bottom of it twisting itself into the rudiments of a cruel laugh, a ferocious impatience. — And these people pay the *taille!* And you want to take from them their salt too! And you know not what you strip bare, or, as you call it, govern; what, with the heedless cowardly squirt of your pen, you will think you can continue stripping with impunity forever, till the Catastrophe come! Such sights recall deep thoughts to one. 'Poor Jean-Jacques!' I said to myself: 'they that sent thee, and thy System, to copy music among such a People as these same, have confuted thy System but ill!' But, on the other hand, these thoughts were consolatory for a man who has all his life preached the necessity of solacing the poor, of universal instruction; who has tried to show what such instruction and such solacement ought to be, if it would form a barrier (the sole possible barrier) between oppression and revolt; the sole but the infallible treaty of peace between the high and the low! Ah, Madame! this government by blind-man's-buff, stumbling along too far, will end by the GENERAL OVERTURN."

Prophetic Marquis! — Might other nations listen to thee better than France did: for it concerns them *all!* But now is it not curious to think how the whole world might have gone so differently, but for this very prophet? Had the young Mirabeau had a father as other men have; or even no father at all! Consider him, in that case, rising by natural gradation, by the rank, the opportunity, the irrepressible buoyant faculties he had, step after step, to official place, — to the chief official place; as in a time when Turgots, Neckers, and men of ability, were grown indispensable, he was sure to have done. By natural witchery he bewitches Marie-Antoinette; her most of all, with her quick, susceptive instincts, her quick sense for whatever was great and noble, her quick hatred for whatever was but pedantic, Neckerish, Fayettish, and pretending to be great. King Louis is a nullity; happily then reduced to be one: there would then have been at the summit of France the one French Man who could have grappled with that great Question; who, yielding and refusing, managing, guiding, and, in short, *seeing* and daring what was to be done, had perhaps saved France her Revolution; remaking her by peaceabler methods! But to the Supreme Powers it seemed not so. Once, after a thousand years, all nations were to see the great Conflagration and Self-combustion of a Nation, — and learn from it if they could. And now, for a Swallower of Formulas, was there a better schoolmaster in the world than this very Friend of Men; a better education conceivable than this which Alcides-Mirabeau had? Trust in Heaven, good reader, for the fate of nations, for the fall of a sparrow.

Gabriel Honoré has acquitted himself so well in Paris, turning the great people round his thumb, with that "*fond gaillard*, basis of gayety," with that "*terrible don de la familiarité;*" with those ways he has. Neither, in the quite opposite Man-of-business department, when summer comes and rurality with it, is he found wanting. In the summer of the year, the old Friend of Men despatches him to the Limousin, to his own estate of Pierre Buffière, or his wife's own estate (under the law-balance about this time), to see whether anything can be done for men there. Much is to be done there; the Peasants, short of all things, even of victuals, here as everywhere, wear "a settled *souffre-douleur* (pain-stricken) look, as if they reckoned that the pillage of men was an inevitable ordinance of Heaven, to be put up with like the wind and the hail." Here, in the solitude of the Limousin, Gabriel is still Gabriel: he rides, he writes and runs; eats out of the poor people's pots; speaks to them, redresses them; institutes a court of Villager "*prudhommes*, good men and true," — once more carries all before him. Confess, O Rhadamanthine Marquis, we say again, that there are worse sad-dogs than this! "He is," confesses the Marquis, "the Demon of the Impossible, *le démon de la chose impossible*."[1] Most true this also: *impossible* is a word not in his dictionary. Thus the same Gabriel Honoré, long afterwards (as Dumont will witness), orders his secretary to do some miracle or other, miraculous within the time. The secretary answers, "Monsieur, it is impossible." — "Impossible?" answers Gabriel: "*Ne me dites jamais ce bête de mot*, Never name to me that blockhead of a word!" Really, one would say, a good fellow, were he well dealt with, — though still broad-billed, and with latent tendencies to take the water. The following otherwise insignificant Letter, addressed to the Bailli, seems to us worth copying. Is not his young Lordship, if still in the dandy-state and style-of-mockery, very handsome in it; standing there in the snow? It is of date December, 1771, and far onwards on the road towards Mirabeau Castle: —

"*Fracti bello satisque repulsi ductores Danaûm:* here, dear uncle, is a beginning in good Latin, which means that I am broken with fatigue, not having, this whole week, slept more than sentinels do; and sounding, at the same time, with the wheels of my vehicle, most of the ruts and jolts that lie between Paris and Marseilles. Ruts deep and numerous. Moreover, my axle broke between Mucreau, Romané, Chambertin and Beaune; the centre of four wine districts: what a geographical point, if I had had the wit to be a drunkard! The mischief happened towards five in the evening; my lackey had gone on before. There fell nothing at the time but melted snow; happily it afterwards took some consistency. The neighborhood of Beaune made me hope to find genius in the natives of the country: I had need of good counsel; the devil counselled me at first to swear, but that whim passed, and I fell by preference into the temptation of laughing; for a holy priest came jogging up, wrapt to the chin; against the blessed visage of whom the sleet was beating, which made him cut so singular a face, that I think this was the thing drove me from swearing. The holy man inquired, seeing my chaise on its beam-ends, and one of the wheels wanting, whether anything had befallen. I answered, 'there was nothing falling here but snow.' 'Ah,' said he, ingeniously, 'it is your chaise, then, that is broken.' I admired the sagacity of the man, and begged him to double his pace, with his horse's permission (who was also making a pleasant expression of countenance, as the snow beat on his nose); and to be so good as give notice at Chaigny that I was there. He assured me he would tell it to the post-mistress herself, she being his cousin; that she was a very amiable woman, married three years ago to one of the honestest men of the place, nephew to the king's procureur at ——: in fine, after giving me all the outs and ins of himself, the curate, of his cousin, his cousin's husband, and I know not whom more, he was pleased to give the spurs to his horse, which thereupon gave a grunt, and went on.

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[1] See La Fontaine: *Contes*, l. iv. c. 15.

"I forgot to tell you that I had sent the postilion off to Mucreau, which he knew the road to, for he went thither daily, he said, to have a glass; a thing I could well believe, or even two glasses. The man was but tipsified when he went; happily, when he returned, which was very late, he was drunk. I walked sentry: several Beaune men passed, all of whom asked me, if anything had befallen? I answered one of them, that it was an experiment; that I had been sent from Paris to see whether a chaise would run with one wheel; mine had come so far, but I was going to write that two wheels were preferable. At this moment my worthy friend struck his shin against the other wheel; clapped his hand on the hurt place;

swore, as I had near done; and then said, smiling, 'Ah, Monsieur, there is the other wheel!' 'The devil there is!' said I, as if astonished. Another, after examining long, with a very capable air, informed me, '*Ma foi,* Monsieur! it is your *essi* [meaning *essieu,* or axle] that is broken.'"

Mirabeau's errand to Provence, in this winter-season, was several-fold. To look after the Mirabeau estates; to domesticate himself among his people and peers in that region; — perhaps to choose a wife. Lately, as we saw, the old Marquis could think of none suitable, if it were not the Empress Catherine. But Gabriel has ripened astonishingly since that, under this sunshine of paternal favor, — the first gleam of such weather he has ever had. Short of the Empress, it were very well to marry, the Marquis now thinks, provided your bride had money. A bride, not with money, yet with connections, expectations, is found; and by stormy eloquence (Marquis seconding) is carried: woe worth the hour! Her portrait, by the seconding Marquis himself, is not very captivating: "Marie-Emilie de Covet, only daughter of the Marquis de Marignane, in her eighteenth year then; she had a very ordinary face, even a vulgar one at the first glance; brown, nay almost tawny (*mauricaud*); fine eyes, fine hair; teeth not good, but a prettyish continual smile; figure small, but agreeable, though leaning a little to one side; showed great sprightliness of mind, ingenuous, adroit, delicate, lively, sportful; one of the most essentially pretty characters." This brown, almost tawny little woman, much of a fool too, Mirabeau gets to wife, on the 22d of June, 1772. With her, and with a pension of 3,000 francs from his father-in-law, and one of 6,000 from his own father (say £500 in all), and rich expectancies, he shall sit down, in the bottom of Provence, by his own hired hearth, in the town of Aix, and bless Heaven.

Candor will admit that this young Alexander, just beginning his twenty-fourth year, might grumble a little, seeing only one such world to conquer. However, he had his books, he had his hopes; health, faculty; a Universe (whereof even the town of Aix formed part) all rich with fruit and forbidden-fruit round him; the unspeakable "seedfield of Time" wherein to sow: he said to himself, Go to, I will be wise. And yet human nature is frail. One can judge too, whether the old Marquis, now coming into decided lawsuit with his wife, was of a humor to forgive peccadilloes. The terrible, hoarsely calm, Rhadamanthine way in which he expresses himself on this matter of the lawsuit to his brother, and enjoins silence from all mortals but him, might affect weak nerves; wherefore, contrary to purpose, we omit it. O just Marquis! In fact, the Riquetti household at this time can do little for frail human nature; except, perhaps, make it fall faster. The Riquetti household is getting scattered; not always led asunder, but driven and hurled asunder: the tornado times for it have begun. One daughter is Madame du Saillant (still living), a judicious sister: another is Madame de Cabris, not so judicious; for, indeed, her husband has lawsuits, — owing to "defamatory couplets" proceeding from him; she gets "insulted on the public promenade of Grasse," by a certain Baron de Villeneuve-Moans, whom some defamatory couplet had touched upon; — all the parties in the business being fools. Nay, poor woman, she by and by, we find, takes up with preternuptial persons; with a certain Brianson in epaulettes, described candidly, by the *Fils Adoptif,* as "a man who" — is not fit to be described.

A young heir-apparent of all the Mirabeaus is required to make some figure; especially in marrying himself. The present young heir-apparent has nothing to make a figure with but bare five hundred a year, and very considerable debts. Old Mirabeau is hard as the Mosaic rock, and no wand proves miraculous on him; for *trousseaus, cadeaus,* foot-washings, festivities and house-heatings, he does simply not yield one sou. The heir must himself yield them. He does so, and handsomely: but, alas, the five hundred a year, and very considerable debts? Quit Aix and dinner-giving; retire to the old Château in the gorge of two valleys! Devised and done. But now, a young Wife used to the delicacies of life, ought she not to have some suite of rooms done up for her? Upholsterers hammer and furbish; with effect; not without bills.

Then the very considerable Jew-debts! Poor Mirabeau sees nothing for it, but to run to the father-in-law with tears in his eyes; and conjure him to make those "rich expectations" in some measure fruitions. Forty thousand francs; to such length will the father-in-law, moved by these tears, by this fire-eloquence, table ready-money; provided old Marquis Mirabeau, who has some provisional reversionary interest in the thing, will grant quittance. Old Marquis Mirabeau, written to in the most impassioned persuasive manner, answers by a letter, of the sort they call *Sealed* Letter (*Lettre de Cachet*), ordering the impassioned Persuasive, under his Majesty's hand and seal, to bundle into Coventry as we should say, into Manosque as the Sealed Letter says! — Farewell, thou old Château, with thy upholstered rooms, on thy sheer rock, by the angry-flowing Durance: welcome, thou miserable little borough of Manosque, since hither Fate drives us! In Manosque, too, a man can live, and read; can write an *Essai sur le Despotisme* (and have it printed in Switzerland, 1774); full of fire and rough vigor, and still worth reading.

The *Essay on Despotism*, with so little of the *Ephémérides* and Quesnay in it, could find but a hard critic in the old Marquis; snuffling out something (one fancies) about "Reflex and reverberance;" formulas getting snuffed up; rash hair-brain treating matters that require age and gravity; — however, let it pass. Unhappily there came other offences. A certain gawk, named Chevalier de Gassaud, accustomed to visit in the house at Manosque, sees good to commence a kind of theoretic flirtation with the little brown Wife, which she theoretically sees good to return. Billet meets billet; glance follows glance, *crescendo allegro;* — till the Husband opens his lips, volcano-like, with a proposal to kick Chevalier de Gassaud out of doors. Chevalier de Gassaud goes unkicked, but not without some explosion or *éclat:* there is like to be a duel; only that Gassaud, knowing what a sword this Riquetti wears, will not fight; and his father has to plead and beg. Generous Count, kill not my poor son: alas, already this most lamentable explosion itself has broken off the finest marriage-settlement, and now the family will not hear of him! The generous

Count, so pleaded with, not only flings the duel to the winds, but gallops off, forgetful of the *Lettre de Cachet,* half desperate, to plead with the marriage-family; to preach with them, and pray, till they have taken poor Gassaud into favor again. Prosperous in this, for nothing can resist such pleading, he may now ride home more leisurely, with the consciousness of a right action for once.

As we hint, this ride of his lies beyond the limits fixed in the royal Sealed Letter; but no one surely will mind it, no one will report it. A beautiful summer evening: O poor Gabriel, it is the last peaceably prosperous ride thou shalt have for long, — perhaps almost ever in the world! For lo! who is this that comes curricling through the level yellow sunlight; like one of Respectability, keeping his gig? By Day and Night! it is that base Baron, de Villeneuve-Moans, who insulted Sister Cabris in the promenade of Grasse! Human nature, without time for reflection, is liable to err. The swift-rolling gig is already in contact with one, the horse rearing against your horse; and you dismount, almost without knowing. Satisfaction which gentlemen expect, Monsieur! No? Do I hear rightly No? In that case, Monsieur — And this wild Gabriel (*horresco referens!*) clutches the respectable Villeneuve-Moans; and horsewhips him there, not emblematically only, but practically, on the king's highway: seen of some peasants! Here is a message for Rumor to blow abroad.

Rumor blows, — to Paris as else-whither: for answer, on the 26th of June, 1774, there arrives a fresh Sealed Letter of more emphasis; there arrive with it grim catchpoles and their chaise: the Swallower of Formulas, snatched away from his wife, from his child then dying, from his last shadow of a home, even an exiled home, is trundling towards Marseilles; towards the Castle of If, which frowns out among the waters in the roadstead there! Girt with the blue Mediterranean; within iron stanchions; cut off from pen, paper, and friends, and men, except the Cerberus of the place, who is charged to be very sharp with him, there shall he sit: such virtue is in a Sealed Letter; so has the grim old Marquis ordered it.

Our gleam of sunshine, then, is darkening miserably down? Down, O thou poor Mirabeau, to thick midnight! Surely Formulas are all too cruel on thee: thou art getting really into war with Formulas (terriblest of wars); and thou, by God's help and the Devil's, wilt make away with them, — in the terriblest manner! From this hour, we say, thick and thicker darkness settles round poor Gabriel; his life-path growing ever painfuler; alas, growing ever more devious, beset by *ignes fatui*, and lights not of Heaven. Such Alcides' Labors have seldom been allotted to any man.

Check thy hot frenzy, thy hot tears, poor Mirabeau; adjust thyself as it may be; for there is no help. Autumn becomes loud winter, revives into gentle spring: the waves beat round the Castle of If, at the mouth of Marseilles harbor; girdling in the unhappiest man. No, not the unhappiest: poor Gabriel has such a "*fond gaillard*, basis of joy and gayety;" there is a deep fiery life in him, which no blackness of destiny can quench. The Cerberus of If, M. Dallègre, relents, as all Cerberuses do with him; gives paper, gives sympathy and counsel. Nay letters have already been introduced; "buttoned in some scoundrel's gaiters," the old Marquis says! On Sister du Saillant's kind letter there fall "tears;" nevertheless you do not always weep. You do better; write a brave *Col-d'Argent's* Memoirs (quoted from above); occupy yourself with projects and efforts. Sometimes, alas, you do worse, though in the other direction, — where Canteen-keepers have pretty wives! A mere peccadillo this of the frail fair *Cantinière* (according to the *Fils Adoptif*); of which too much was made at the time. — Nor are juster consolations wanting, sisters and brothers bidding you be of hope. Our readers have heard Count Mirabeau designated as "the elder of my lads:" what if we now exhibited the younger for one moment? The Maltese Chevalier de Mirabeau, a rough son of the sea in those days: he also is a sad dog, but has the advantage of not being the elder. He has started from Malta, from a sick-bed, and got hither to Marseilles, in the dead of winter; the link of Nature drawing him, shaggy sea-monster as he is.

"It was a rough wind; none of the boatmen would leave the quay with me: I induced two of them, more by bullyings than by money; for thou knowest I have no money, and am well furnished, thank God, with the gift of speaking or stuttering. I reach the Castle of If: gates closed; and the Lieutenant, as M. Dallègre was not there, tells me quite sweetly that I must return as I came. 'Not, if you please, till I have seen Gabriel.' 'It is not allowed.' — 'I will write to him.' 'Not that either.' — 'Then I will wait for M. Dallègre.' 'Just so; but for four-and-twenty hours, not more.' Whereupon I take my resolution; I go to La Mouret [the Canteen-keeper's pretty wife]; we agree that so soon as the tattoo is beat, I shall see this poor devil. I get to him, in fact; not like a *paladin*, but like a pickpocket or a gallant, which thou wilt; and we unbosom ourselves. They had been afraid that he would heat my head to the temperature of his own: Sister Cabris, they do him little justice; I can assure thee that while he was telling me his story, and when my rage broke out in these words: 'Though still weakly, I have two arms, strong enough to break M. Villeneuve-Moans's, or his cowardly persecuting brother's at least,' he said to me, '*Mon ami*, thou wilt ruin us both.' And, I confess, this consideration alone, perhaps, hindered the execution of a project, which could not have profited, which nothing but the fermentation of a head such as mine could excuse."[1]

Reader, this tarry young Maltese Chevalier is the Vicomte de Mirabeau, or Younger Mirabeau; whom all men heard of in the Revolution time, — oftenest by the more familiar name of *Mirabeau-Tonneau*, or Barrel Mirabeau, from his bulk, and the quantity of drink he usually held. It is the same Barrel Mirabeau who, in the States-General, broke his sword, because the Noblesse gave in, and chivalry was now ended: for in politics he was directly the opposite of his elder brother; and spoke considerably as a public man, making men laugh (for he was a wild surly fellow, with much wit in him and much liquor); — then went indignantly across the Rhine, and drilled Emigrant Regiments: but as he sat one morning in his tent, sour of stomach doubtless and of heart, meditating in Tartarean humor on the turn things took, a certain captain or subaltern demands admittance on business; is refused; again demands, and then again, till the Colonel Viscount Barrel Mirabeau, blazing up into a mere burning brandy-barrel, clutches his sword, and tumbles out on this *canaille* of an intruder, — alas, on the *canaille* of an intruder's sword's-point (who drew with swift dexterity), and dies, and it is all done with him! That was the fifth act of Barrel Mirabeau's life-tragedy, unlike, and yet like, this first act in the Castle of If; and so the curtain fell, the Newspapers calling it "apoplexy" and "alarming accident."

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[1] Vol. ii. p. 43.

Brother and Sisters, the little brown Wife, the Cerberus of If, all solicit for a penitent unfortunate sinner. The old Marquis's ear is deaf as that of Destiny. Solely by way of variation, not of alleviation, the rather as the If Cerberus too has been bewitched, he has this sinner removed, in May next, after some nine months' space, to the Castle of Joux; an "old owl's nest, with a few invalids," among the Jura Mountains. Instead of melancholy main, let him now try the melancholy granites (still capped with snow at this season), with their mists and owlets; and on the whole adjust himself as if for permanence or continuance there; on a pension of 1,200 francs, fifty pounds a year, since he could not do with five hundred! Poor Mirabeau; — and poor Mirabeau's Wife? Reader, the foolish little brown woman tires of soliciting: her child being buried, her husband buried alive, and her little brown self being still above ground and under twenty, she takes to recreation, theoretic flirtation; ceases soliciting, begins successful forgetting. The marriage, cut asunder that day the catchpole chaise drew up at Manosque, will never come together again, in spite of efforts; but flow onwards in two separate streams, to lose itself in the frightfulest sand-deserts. Husband and wife never more saw each other with eyes.

Not far from the melancholy Castle of Joux lies the little melancholy borough of Pontarlier; whither our Prisoner has leave, on his parole, to walk when he chooses. A melancholy little borough: yet in it is a certain Monnier Household; whereby hangs, and will hang, a tale. Of old M. Monnier, respectable legal President, now in his seventy-fifth year, we shall say less than of his wife, Sophie Monnier (once De Ruffey, from Dijon, sprung from legal Presidents there), who is still but short way out of her teens. Yet she has been married, or *seemed* to be married, four years: one of the loveliest sad-heroic women of this or any district of country. What accursed freak of Fate brought January and May together here once again? Alas, it is a custom there, good reader! Thus the old Naturalist Buffon, who, at the age of sixty-three (what is called "the Saint-Martin's summer of incipient dotage and new-myrtle garlands," which visits some men), went ransacking the country for a young wife, had very nearly got this identical Sophie; but did get another, known as Madame de Buffon, well known to Philip Égalité, having turned out ill. Sophie de Ruffey loved wise men, but not at that extremely advanced period of life. However, the question for her is: Does she love a Convent better? Her mother and father are rigidly devout, and rigidly vain and poor: the poor girl, sad-heroic, is probably a kind of freethinker. And now, old President Monnier "quarrelling with his daughter;" and then coming over to Pontarlier with gold-bags, marriage-settlements, and the prospect of dying soon? It is that same miserable tale, often sung against, often spoken against; very miserable indeed!

But fancy what an effect the fiery eloquence of a Mirabeau produced in this sombre Household: one's young girl-dreams incarnated, most unexpectedly, in this wild-glowing mass of manhood, though rather ugly; old Monnier himself gleaming up into a kind of vitality to hear him! Or fancy whether a sad-heroic face, glancing on you with a thankfulness like to become glad-heroic, were not —— ? Mirabeau felt, by known symptoms, that the sweetest, fatalest incantation was stealing over him, which could lead only to the devil, for all parties interested. He wrote to his wife, entreating in the name of Heaven, that she would come to him: thereby might the "sight of his duties" fortify him; he meanwhile would at least forbear Pontarlier. The wife "answered by a few icy lines, indicating, in a covert way, that she thought me not in my wits." He ceases forbearing Pontarlier; sweeter is it than the owl's nest: he returns thither, with sweeter and ever sweeter welcome; and so —!

Old Monnier saw nothing, or winked hard; — not so our old foolish Commandant of the Castle of Joux. He, though kind to his prisoner formerly, "had been making some pretensions to Sophie himself; he was but forty or five-and-forty years older than I; my ugliness was not greater than his; and I had the advantage of being an honest man." Green-eyed Jealousy, in the shape of this old ugly Commandant, warns Monnier by letter; also, on some thin pretext, restricts Mirabeau henceforth to the four walls of Joux. Mirabeau flings back such restriction, in an indignant Letter to this green-eyed Commandant; indignantly steps over into Switzerland, which is but a few miles off; — returns, however, in a day or two (it is dark January, 1776), covertly to Pontarlier. There is an explosion, what they call *éclat*. Sophie Monnier, sharply dealt with, resists; avows her love for Gabriel Honoré; asserts her right to love him, her purpose to continue doing it. She is sent home to Dijon; Gabriel Honoré covertly follows her thither.

Explosions: what a continued series of explosions, — through winter, spring, summer! There are tears, devotional exercises, threatenings to commit suicide; there are stolen interviews, perils, proud avowals and lowly concealments. He on his part "voluntarily constitutes himself prisoner;" and does other haughty, vehement things; some Commandants behaving honorably, and some not: one Commandant (old Marquis Mirabeau of the Château of Bignon) getting ready his thunder-bolts in the distance! "I have been lucky enough to obtain Mont Saint-Michel, in Normandy," says the old Marquis: "I think that prison good, because there is first the Castle itself, then a ring-work all round the mountain; and, after that, a pretty long passage among the sands, where you need guides, to avoid being drowned in the quicksands." Yes, it rises there, that mountain of Saint-Michel, and Mountain of

Misery; towering sheer up, like a bleak Pisgah with outlooks only into desolation, sand, salt-water and despair.[1] Fly, thou poor Gabriel Honoré! Thou poor Sophie, return to Pontarlier; for Convent-walls too are cruel!

Gabriel flies; and indeed there fly with him Sister Cabris and her preternuptial epauletted Brianson, who are already in flight for their own behoof: into deep thickets and covered ways, wide over the Southwest of France. Marquis Mirabeau, thinking with a fond sorrow of Mont Saint-Michel and its quicksands, chooses the two best bloodhounds the Police of Paris has (Inspector Brugnière and another); and, unmuzzling them, cries: Hunt! — Man being a venatory creature, and the Chase perennially interesting to him, we have thought it might be good to present certain broken glimpses of this man-hunt through the Southwest of France; of which, by a singular felicity, some Narrative exists, in the shape of official reports, very ill-spelt and otherwise curious, written down sectionally by the chief slot-hound himself, for transmittal to the chief huntsman eying it intently from the distance. It is not every day that there is such game afield as a Gabriel Honoré, such a huntsman tallyhoing in the distance as old Marquis Mirabeau; or that you have a hound who can, in never so bad spelling, *tell* you what his notions of the business are: —

"On arriving at Dijon, I went to see Madame la Présidente Ruffey, to gather new informations from her. Madame informed me that there was in the town a certain Chevalier de Macon, a half-pay officer, who was the Sieur Mirabeau's friend, his companion and confidant, and that if any one could get acquainted with *him*" —. "The Sieur Brugnière went therefore to lodge at this Macon's inn; finds means to get acquainted with him, affecting the same tastes, following him to fencing-rooms, billiard-tables and other such places." —

"Accordingly, on reaching Geneva, we learn that the Sieur Mirabeau did arrive there on the 5th of June. He left it for Thonon in Savoy; two women in men's-clothes came asking for him, and they all went away together, by Chambéry, and thence by Turin. At Thonon we could not learn what road they had taken; so secret are they, and involve themselves in all manner of detours. After three days of incredible fatigue, we discover the man that had driven them: it is back to Geneva that they are gone; we hasten hither again, and have good hope of finding them now." — Hope fallacious as before!

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[1] See *Mémoires de Madame de Genlis*, iii. 201.

"However, what helps Brugnière and me a little is this, that the Sieur Mirabeau and his train, though already armed like smugglers, bought yet other pistols, and likewise sabres, even a hunting-knife with a secret pistol for handle; we learned this at Geneva. They take remote diabolic roads to avoid entering France. . . . Following on foot the trace of them, it brings us to Lyons, where they seem to have taken the most obscure methods, accompanied with impenetrable cunning, to enter the town; we lost all track of them; our researches were most painful. At length we have come upon a man named Saint-Jean, confidential servant of Madame de Cabris." — "On quitting this, along with Brianson, who I think is a bad subject, M. de Mirabeau signified to Saint-Jean that they were going to Lorgue in Provence, which is Brianson's country; that Brianson was then to accompany him as far as Nice, where he would embark for Geneva and pass a month there." —

"Following this trace of M. de Mirabeau, who had embarked on the Rhone at Lyons, we came to Avignon: here we find he took post-horses, having sent for them half a league from the town; he had another pair of pistols bought for him here; and then, being well hidden in the cabriolet, drove through Avignon, put letters in the post-office; it was about the dusk of the evening. But now at that time was the chief tumult of the Beaucaire Fair,[1] and this cabriolet was so lost in the crowd that it was impossible for us to track it farther. However, the domestic Saint-Jean — . . . . a M. Marsaut, Advocate, an honorable man, who gave us all possible directions." "He introduced us to this Brianson, with whom we contrived to sup. We gave ourselves out for travellers, Lyons merchants, who were going, the one of us to Geneva and Italy, the other to Geneva only; it was the way to make this Brianson speak." . . .

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[1] Napoleon's *Souper de Beaucaire!*

"When you leave Provence to pass into the Country of Nice, you have to wade across the Var; a torrent which is almost always dangerous, and is often impracticable: it sometimes spreads out to a quarter of a league in breadth, and has an astonishing rapidity at all times: its reputation is greater still; and travellers who have to cross speak of it with terror. On each bank there are strong men who make a trade of passing travellers across; going before them and around them, with strong poles, to sound the bottom, which will change several times in a day: they take great pains to increase your fear, even when there is not danger. These people, by whose means we passed, told us that they had offered to pass a gentleman having the same description as he we seek; that this gentleman would have nobody, but crossed with some women of the country, who were wading without guide; that he seemed to dislike being looked at too close: we made the utmost researches there. We found that, at some distance, this person had entered a hedge-tavern for some refreshment; that he had a gold box with a lady's portrait in it, and, in a word, the same description every way; that he asked if they did not know of any ship at Nice for Italy, and that they told him of one for England. He had crossed the Var, as I had the honor of informing you, Monsieur, above: I have the honor of observing that there is no Police at Nice. . . . Found that there had embarked at Villefranche, which is another little haven near to Nice, a private person unknown, answering still to the same description (except that he wore a red coat, whereas M. de Mirabeau has been followed hitherto under a green coat, a red-brown one (*mordoré*), and a gray ribbed one); and embarked for England. In spite of this we sent persons into the Heights to get information, who know the secret passages; the Sieur Brugnière mounted a mule accustomed to those horrific and terrifying Mountains, took a guide, and made all possible researches too: in a word, Monsieur, we have done all that the human mind (*l'esprit humain*) can imagine, and this when the heats are so excessive; and we are worn out with fatigue, and our limbs swoln."

No: all that the human mind can imagine is ineffectual. On the 23d night of August (1776), Sophie de Monnier, in man's clothes, is scaling the Monnier garden-wall at Pontarlier; is crossing the Swiss marches, wrapped in a cloak of darkness, borne on the wings of love and despair. Gabriel Honoré, wrapped in the like cloak, borne on the like vehicle, is gone with her to Holland, — thenceforth a broken man.

"Crime forever lamentable," ejaculates the *Fils Adoptif;* "of which the world has so spoken, and must forever speak." There are, indeed, many things easy to be spoken of it; and also some things not easy to be spoken. Why, for example, thou virtuous *Fils Adoptif*, was that of the Canteen-keeper's wife at If such a peccadillo, and this of the legal President's wife such a crime, lamentable to that late date of "forever"? The present reviewer fancies them to be the same crime. Again, might not the first grand criminal and sinner in this business be legal President Monnier, the distracted, spleen-stricken, moon-stricken old man; — liable to trial, with non-acquittal or difficult acquittal, at the great Bar of Nature herself? And then the second sinner in it? and the third and the fourth? ' He that is *without* sin among you"! — One thing, therefore, the present reviewer will speak, in the words of old Samuel Johnson: My dear *Fils Adoptif*, my dear brethren of Mankind, "endeavor to clear your mind of Cant!" It is positively the prime necessity for all men, and all women and children, in these days, who would have their souls live, were it even feebly, and not die of the detestablest asphyxia, — as in carbonic vapor, the more horrible, for breathing of, the more *clean* it looks.

That the *Parlement* of Besançon indicted Mirabeau for *rapt et vol*, abduction and robbery; that they condemned him "in contumacious absence," and went the length of beheading a Paper Effigy of him, was perhaps extremely suitable; — but not to be dwelt on here. Neither do we pry curiously into the garret-life in Holland and Amsterdam; being straitened for room. The wild man and his beautiful sad-heroic woman lived out their romance of reality, as well as was to be expected. Hot tempers go not always softly together; neither did the course of true love, either in wedlock or in elopement, ever run smooth. Yet it did run, in this instance, copious, if not smooth; with quarrel and reconcilement, tears and heart effusion; sharp tropical squalls, and also the gorgeous effulgence and exuberance of general tropical weather. It was like a little Paphos islet in the middle of blackness; the very danger and despair that environed it made the islet blissful; — even as in virtue of death, life to the fretfulest becomes tolerable, becomes sweet, death being so nigh. At any hour, might not king's exempt or other dread alguazil knock at our garret establishment, here "in the *Kalbestrand*, at Lequesne the tailor's," and dissolve it? Gabriel toils for Dutch booksellers; bearing their heavy load; translating *Watson's Philip Second;* doing endless Gibeonite work: earning, however, his gold louis a day. Sophie sews and scours beside him, with her soft fingers, not grudging it: in hard toils, in trembling joys begirt with terrors, with one terror, that of being parted, — their days roll swiftly on. For eight tropical months! — Ah, at the end of some eight months (14th May, 1777) enter the alguazil! He is in the shape of Brugnière, our old slot-hound of the Southwest; the swelling of his legs is fallen now; this time the human mind has been able to manage it. He carries King's orders, High Mightiness's sanctions; sealed parchments. Gabriel Honoré shall be carried this way, Sophie that; Sophie, like to be a mother, shall behold him no more. Desperation, even in the female character, can go no farther: she will kill herself that hour, as even the slot-hound believes, — had not the very slot-hound, in mercy, undertaken that they should have some means of correspondence; that hope should not utterly be cut away. With embracings and interjections, sobbings that cannot be uttered, they tear themselves asunder, stony Paris now nigh: Mirabeau towards his prison of Vincennes; Sophie to some milder Convent-parlor relegation, there to await what Fate, very minatory at this time, will see good to bring.

Conceive the giant Mirabeau locked fast, then, in Doubting-castle of Vincennes; his hot soul surging up, wildly breaking itself against cold obstruction; the voice of his despair reverberated on him by dead stone walls. Fallen in the eyes of the world, the ambitious haughty man; his fair life-hopes from without all spoiled and become foul ashes: and from within, — what he has done, what he has parted with and *un*done! Deaf as Destiny is a Rhadamanthine father; inaccessible even to the attempt at pleading. Heavy doors have slammed to; their bolts growling *Woe to thee!* Great Paris sends eastward its daily multitudinous hum; in the evening sun thou seest its weather-cocks glitter, its old grim towers and fuliginous life-breath all gilded: and thou? — Neither evening nor morning, nor change of day nor season, brings deliverance. Forgotten of Earth; not too hopefully remembered of Heaven! No passionate *Pater-Peccavi* can move an old Marquis; deaf he as Destiny. Thou must sit there. — For forty-two months, by the great Zodiacal Horologe! The heir of the Riquettis, sinful, and yet more sinned against, has worn out his wardrobe; complains that his clothes get looped and windowed, insufficient against the weather. His eyesight is failing; the family disorder, *nephritis,* afflicts him; the doctors declare horse-exercise essential to preserve life. Within the walls, then! answers the old Marquis. Count de Mirabeau "rides in the garden of forty paces;" with quick turns, hamperedly, overlooked by donjons and high stone barriers.

And yet fancy not Mirabeau spent his time in mere wailing and raging. Far from that! —

> "To whine, put finger i' the eye, and sob,
> Because he had ne'er another tub,"

was in no case Mirabeau's method, more than Diogenes's. Other such wild-glowing mass of life, which you might beat with Cyclops' hammers (and, alas, not beat the dross *out* of), was not in Europe at that time. Call him not the strongest man then living; for light, as we said, and not fire, is the strong thing: yet call him strong too, very strong; and for toughness, tenacity, vivaciousness and a *fond gaillard,* call him toughest of all. Raging passions, ill-governed; reckless tumult from within, merciless oppression from without; ten men might have died of what this Gabriel Honoré did not yet die of. Police-captain Lenoir allowed him, in mercy and according to engagement, to correspond with Sophie; the condition was, that the letters should be seen by Lenoir, and be returned into his keeping. Mirabeau corresponded; in fire and tears, copiously, not Werter-like, but Mirabeau-like. Then he had penitential petitions, *Pater-Peccavis* to write, to get presented and enforced; for which end all manner of friends must be urged: correspondence enough. Besides, he could read, though very limitedly: he could even compose or compile; extracting, *not* in the manner of the bee, from the very Bible and Dom Calmet, a "*Biblion Eroticon*," which can be recommended to no woman or man. The pious *Fils Adoptif* drops a veil over his face at this scandal; and says lamentably that there is nothing to be said. As for the correspondence with Sophie, it lay in Lenoir's desk, forgotten; but was found there by Manuel, Procureur of the Commune in 1792, when so many desks flew open, and by him given to the world. A book which fair sensibility (rather in a private way) loves to weep over: not this reviewer, to any considerable extent; not at all here, in his present strait for room. Good love-letters of their kind notwithstanding.

But if anything can swell farther the tears of fair sensibility over Mirabeau's *Correspondence of Vincennes*, it must be this: the issue it ended in. After a space of years, these two lovers, wrenched asunder in Holland, and allowed to correspond that they might not poison themselves, met again: it was under cloud of night; in Sophie's apartment, in the country; Mirabeau, "disguised as a porter," had come thither from a considerable distance. And they flew into each other's arms; to weep their child dead, their long unspeakable woes? Not at all. They stood, arms stretched oratorically, calling one another to account for causes of jealousy; grew always louder, arms set a-kimbo; and parted quite loud, never to meet more on earth. In September, 1789, Mirabeau had risen to be a world's wonder: and Sophie, far from him, had sunk out of the world's sight, respected only in the little town of Gien. On the 9th night of September, Mirabeau might be thundering in the Versailles *Salle des Menus*, to be reported of all Journals on the morrow; and Sophie, twice disappointed of new marriage, the sad-heroic temper darkened now into perfect black, was reclining, self-tied to her sofa, with a pan of charcoal burning near; to die as the unhappy die. Said we not, "the course of true love never did run smooth"?

However, after two-and-forty months, and negotiations, and more intercessions than in Catholic countries will free a soul out of Purgatory, Mirabeau is once more delivered from the strong place: not into his own home (home, wife and the whole Past are far parted from him); not into his father's home; but forth; — hurled forth, to seek his fortune Ishmael-like in the wide hunting-field of the world. Consider him, O reader; thou wilt find him very notable. A disgraced man, not a broken one; ruined outwardly, not ruined inwardly; not yet, for there is no ruining of him on that side. Such a buoyancy of radical fire and *fond gaillard* he has; with his dignity and vanity, levity, solidity, with his virtues and his vices, what a front he shows! You would say, he bates not a jot, in these sad circumstances, of what he claimed from Fortune, but rather enlarges it: his proud soul, so galled, deformed by manacles and bondage, flings away its prison-gear, bounds forth to the fight again, as if victory, after all, were certain. Post-horses to Pontarlier and the Besançon Parlement; that that "sentence by contumacy" be annulled, and the Paper Effigy have its Head stuck on again! The wild giant, said to be "absent by contumacy," sits voluntarily in the Pontarlier Jail; thunders in pleadings which make Parlementeers quake, and all France listen; and the Head reunites itself to the Paper Effigy with apologies. Monnier and the De Ruffeys know who is the most impudent man alive: the world, with astonishment, who is one of the ablest.

Even the old Marquis snuffles approval, though with qualification. Tough old man, he has lost his own world-famous Lawsuit and other lawsuits, with ruinous expenses; has seen his fortune and projects fail, and even *lettres de cachet* turn out not always satisfactory or sanatory: wherefore he summons his children about him; and, really in a very serene way, declares himself invalided, fit only for the chimney-nook now; to sit patching his old mind together again (*à rebouter sa tête, à se recoudre pièce à pièce*): advice and countenance they, the deserving part of them, shall always enjoy; but *lettres de cachet*, or other the like benefit and guidance, not any more. Right so, thou best of old Marquises! There he rests, then, like the still evening of a thundery day; thunders no more; but rays forth many a curiously tinted light-beam and remark on life; serene to the last. Among Mirabeau's small catalogue of virtues, very small of formulary and conventional virtues, let it not be forgotten that he loved this old father warmly to the end; and forgave his cruelties, or forgot them in kind interpretation of them.

For the Pontarlier Paper Effigy, therefore, it is well: and yet a man lives not comfortably without money. Ah, were one's marriage not disrupted; for the old father-in-law will soon die; those rich expectations were then fruitions! The ablest, not the most shamefaced man in France, is off, next spring (1783), to Aix; stirring Parlement and Heaven and Earth there, to have his wife back. How he worked; with what nobleness and courage (according to the *Fils Adoptif*); giant's work! The sound of him is spread over France and over the world; English travellers, high foreign lordships, turning aside to Aix; and "multitudes gathered even on the roofs" to hear him, the Court-house being crammed to bursting! Demosthenic fire and pathos; penitent husband calling for forgiveness and restitution: — "*ce n'est qu'un claquedents et un fol*," rays forth the old Marquis from the chimney-nook; "a clatter-teeth and madman!" The world and Parlement thought not that; knew not what to think, if not that this was the questionablest able man they had ever heard; and, alas, still farther, — that his cause was *untenable*. No wife, then; and no money! From this second attack on Fortune, Mirabeau returns foiled, and worse than before; resourceless, for now the old Marquis too again eyes him askance. He must hunt Ishmael-like, as we said. Whatsoever of wit or strength he has within himself will stand true to him; on that he can count; unfortunately on almost nothing but that.

Mirabeau's life for the next five years, which creeps troublous, obscure, through several of these Eight Volumes, will probably, in the One right Volume which they hold imprisoned, be delineated briefly. It is the long-drawn practical improvement of the sermon already preached in Rhé, in If, in Joux, in Holland, in Vincennes and elsewhere. A giant man in the flower of his years, in the winter of his prospects, has to see how he will reconcile these two contradictions. With giant energies and talents, with giant virtues even, he, burning to unfold himself, has got put into his hands, for implements and means to do it with, disgrace, contumely, obstruction; character elevated only as Haman was; purse full only of debt-summonses; household, home and possessions, as it were, sown with salt; Ruin's ploughshare furrowing too deeply himself and all that was his. Under these, and not under other conditions, shall this man now live and struggle.

Well might he "weep" long afterwards (though not given to the melting mood), thinking over, with Dumont, how his life had been blasted, by himself, by others; and was now so defaced and thunder-riven, no glory could make it whole again. Truly, as we often say, a weaker, and yet very strong man, might have died, — by hypochondria, by brandy, or by arsenic: but Mirabeau did not die. The world is not his friend, nor the world's law and formula? It will be his enemy, then; his conqueror and master not altogether. There are strong men who can, in case of necessity, make away with formulas (*humer les formules*), and yet find a habitation behind them: these are the very strong; and Mirabeau was of these. The world's esteem having gone quite against him, and most circles of society, with their codes and regulations, pronouncing little but anathema on him, he is nevertheless not lost; he does not sink to desperation; not to dishonesty, or pusillanimity, or splenetic aridity. Nowise! In spite of the world, he is a living strong man there: the world cannot take from him his just consciousness of himself, his warm open-hearted feeling towards others; there are still limits, on all sides, to which the world and the devil cannot drive him. The giant, we say! How he stands, like a mountain; thunder-riven, but broad-based, rooted in the Earth's (in Nature's) own rocks; and will not tumble prostrate! So true is it what a moralist has said: "One could not wish any man to fall into a fault; yet is it often precisely after a fault, or a crime even, that the morality which is in a man first unfolds itself, and what of strength he as a man possesses, now when all else is gone from him."

Mirabeau, through these dim years, is seen wandering from place to place; in France, Germany, Holland, England; finding no rest for the sole of his foot. It is a life of shifts and expedients, *au jour le jour.* Extravagant in his expenses, thriftless, swimming in a welter of debts and difficulties; for which he has to provide by fierce industry, by skill in financiership. The man's revenue is his wits; he has a pen and a head; and, happily for him, "is the demon of the impossible." At no time is he without some blazing project or other, which shall warm and illuminate far and wide; which too often blazes out ineffectual; which in that case he replaces and renews, for his hope is inexhaustible. He writes Pamphlets unweariedly as a steam-engine: on *The Opening of the Scheldt,* and Kaiser Joseph; on *The Order of Cincinnatus,* and Washington; on *Count Cagliostro,* and the Diamond Necklace. Innumerable are the helpers and journeymen, respectable Mauvillons, respectable Dumonts, whom he can set working for him on such matters; it is a gift he has. He writes Books, in as many as eight volumes, which are properly only a larger kind of pamphlets. He has polemics with Caron Beaumarchais on the water-company of Paris; lean Caron shooting sharp arrows into him, which he responds to demoniacally, "flinging hills with all their woods."

He is intimate with many men; his "terrible gift of familiarity," his joyous courtiership and faculty of pleasing, do not forsake him: but it is a questionable intimacy, granted to the man's talents, in spite of his character: a relation which the proud Riquetti, not the humbler that he is poor and ruined, correctly feels. With still more women is he intimate; girt with a whole system of intrigues in that sort, wherever he abide; seldom travelling without a — wife (let us call her) engaged by the year, or during mutual satisfaction. On this large department of Mirabeau's history, what can you say, except that his incontinence was great, enormous, entirely indefensible? If any one please (which we do not) to be present, with the *Fils Adoptif*, at "the *autopsie*" and *post-mortem* examination, he will see curious documents on this head; and to what depths of penalty Nature, in her just self-vindication, can sometimes doom men. The *Fils Adoptif* is very sorry. To the kind called unfortunate females, it would seem nevertheless, this unfortunate male had an aversion amounting to complete *nolo-tangere.*

The old Marquis sits apart in the chimney-nook, observant: what this roaming, unresting, rebellious Titan of a Count may ever prove of use for? If it be not, O Marquis, for the General Overturn, *Culbute Générale?* He is swallowing Formulas; getting endless acquaintance with the Realities of things and men: in audacity, in recklessness, he will not, it is like, be wanting. The old Marquis rays out curious observations on life; — yields no effectual assistance of money

Ministries change and shift; but never, in the new deal, does there turn up a good card for Mirabeau. Necker he does not love, nor is love lost between them. Plausible Calonne hears him Stentor-like denouncing stock-jobbing (*Dénonciation de l'Agiotage*); communes with him, corresponds with him; is glad to get him sent, in some semi-ostensible or spy-diplomatist character, to Berlin; in any way to have him stopped and quieted. The Great Frederic was still on the scene, though now very near the side-scenes: the wiry thin Drill-sergeant of the World, and the broad burly Mutineer of the World, glanced into one another with amazement; the one making entrance, the other making exit. To this Berlin business we owe pamphlets; we owe *Correspondences* ("surreptitiously published" — with consent): we owe (brave Major Mauvillon serving as hodman) the *Monarchie Prussienne*, a Pamphlet in some eight octavo volumes, portions of which are still well worth reading.

Generally, on first making personal acquaintance with Mirabeau as a writer or speaker, one is not a little surprised. Instead of Irish oratory, with tropes and declamatory fervid feeling, such as the rumor one has heard gives prospect of, you are astonished to meet a certain hard angular distinctness, a totally unornamented force and massiveness: clear perspicuity, strong perspicacity, conviction that wishes to convince, — this beyond all things, and instead of all things. You would say the primary character of those utterances, nay of the man himself, is sincerity and insight; strength, and the honest use of strength. Which indeed it is, O reader! Mirabeau's spiritual gift will be found, on examination, to be verily an honest and a great one; far the strongest, best practical intellect of that time; entitled to rank among the strong of all times. These books of his ought to be riddled, like this book of the *Fils Adoptif.* There is precious matter in them; too good to lie hidden among shot-rubbish. Hear this man on any subject, you will find him worth considering. He has words in him, rough deliverances; such as men do not forget. As thus: "I know but three ways of living in this world: by wages for work; by begging; thirdly, by stealing (so named, or not so named)." Again: "Malebranche saw all things in God; and M. Necker sees all things in Necker!" There are nicknames of Mirabeau's worth whole treatises. "Grandison-Cromwell Lafayette:" write a volume on the man, as many volumes have been written, and try to say more! It is the best likeness yet drawn of him, — by a flourish and two dots. Of such inexpressible advantage is it that a man have "an eye, instead of a pair of spectacles merely;" that, seeing through the formulas of things, and even "making away" with many a formula, he see into the thing itself, and so know it and be master of it!

As the years roll on, and that portentous decade of the Eighties, or "Era of Hope," draws towards completion, and it becomes ever more evident to Mirabeau that great things are in the wind, we find his wanderings, as it were, quicken. Suddenly emerging out of Night and Cimmeria, he dashes down on the Paris world, time after time; flashes into it with that fire-glance of his; discerns that the time is not yet come; and then merges back again. Occasionally his pamphlets provoke a fulmination and order of arrest, wherefore he must merge the faster. Nay, your Calonne is good enough to signify it beforehand: On such and such a day I shall order you to be arrested; pray make speed therefore. When the Notables meet, in the spring of 1787, Mirabeau spreads his pinions, alights on Paris and Versailles; it seems to him he ought to be secretary of those Notables. No! friend Dupont de Nemours gets it: the time is not yet come. It is still but the time of "Crispin-Catiline" d'Espréménil, and other such animal-magnetic persons. Nevertheless, the reverend Talleyrand, judicious Dukes, liberal noble friends not a few, are sure that the time will come. Abide thy time.

Hark! On the 27th of December, 1788, here finally is the long-expected announcing itself: royal Proclamation definitively convoking the States-General for May next! Need we ask whether Mirabeau bestirs himself now; whether or not he is off to Provence, to the Assembly of Noblesse there, with all his faculties screwed to the sticking-place? One strong dead-lift pull, thou Titan, and perhaps thou carriest it! How Mirabeau wrestled and strove under these auspices; speaking and contending all day, writing pamphlets, paragraphs, all night; also suffering much, gathering his wild soul together, motionless under reproaches, under drawn swords even, lest his enemies throw him off his guard; how he agitates and represses, unerringly dexterous, sleeplessly unwearied, and is a very "demon of the impossible," let all readers fancy. With "a body of Noblesse more ignorant, greedier, more insolent than any I have ever seen," the Swallower of Formulas was like to have rough work. We must give his celebrated flinging up of the handful of dust, when they drove him out by overwhelming majority: —

"What have I done that was so criminal? I have wished that my Order were wise enough to give to-day what will infallibly be wrested from it to-morrow; that it should receive the merit and glory of sanctioning the assemblage of the Three Orders, which all Provence loudly demands. This is the crime of your 'enemy of peace'! Or rather, I have ventured to believe that the people might be in the right. Ah, doubtless, a patrician soiled with such a thought deserves vengeance! But I am still guiltier than you think; for it is my belief that the people which complains is always in the right; that its indefatigable patience invariably waits the uttermost excesses of oppression, before it can determine on resisting; that it never resists long enough to obtain complete redress; and does not sufficiently know that to strike its enemies into terror and submission, it has only to stand still; that the most innocent as the most invincible of all powers is the power of refusing to do. I believe after this manner: punish the enemy of peace!

"But you, ministers of a God of peace, who are ordained to bless and not to curse, and yet have launched your anathema on me, without even the attempt at enlightening me, at reasoning with me! And you, 'friends of peace,' who denounce to the people, with all vehemence of hatred, the one defender it has yet found, out of its own ranks; — who, to bring about concord, are filling capital and province with placards calculated to arm the rural districts against the towns, if your deeds did not refute your writings; — who, to prepare ways of conciliation, protest against the royal Regulation for convoking the States-General, because it grants the people as many deputies as both the other orders, and against all that the coming National Assembly shall do, unless its laws secure the triumph of your pretensions, the eternity of your privileges! Disinterested 'friends of peace'! I have appealed to your honor, and summon you to state what expressions of mine have offended against either the respect we owe to the royal authority or to the nation's right? Nobles of Provence, Europe is attentive; weigh well your answer. Men of God, beware; God hears you!

"And if you do not answer, but keep silence, shutting yourselves up in the vague declamations you have hurled at me, then allow me to add one word.

"In all countries, in all times, aristocrats have implacably persecuted the people's friends; and if, by some singular combination of fortune, there chanced to arise such a one in their own circle, it was he above all whom they struck at, eager to inspire wider terror by the elevation of their victim. Thus perished the last of the Gracchi by the hands of the patricians; but, being struck with the mortal stab, he flung dust towards Heaven, and called on the Avenging Deities; and from this dust sprang Marius, — Marius not so illustrious for exterminating the Cimbri as for overturning in Rome the tyranny of the Noblesse!"

There goes some foolish story of Mirabeau's having now opened a cloth-shop in Marseilles, to ingratiate himself with the Third Estate; whereat we have often laughed. The image of Mirabeau measuring out drapery to mankind, and deftly snipping at tailors' measures, has something pleasant for the mind. So that, though there is not a shadow of truth in this story, the very lie may justly sustain itself for a while, in the character of lie. Far otherwise was the reality there: "voluntary guard of a hundred men;" Provence crowding by the ten thousand round his chariot-wheels; explosions of rejoicing musketry, heaven-rending acclamation; "people paying two louis for a place at the window"! Hunger itself (very considerable in those days) he can pacify by speech. Violent meal-mobs at Marseilles and at Aix, unmanageable by firearms and governors, he smooths down by the word of his mouth; the governor soliciting him, though unloved. It is as a Roman Triumph, and more. He is chosen deputy for two places; has to decline Marseilles, and honor Aix. Let his enemies look and wonder, and sigh forgotten by him. For this Mirabeau too the career at last opens.

At last! Does not the benevolent reader, though never so unambitious, sympathize a little with this poor brother mortal in such a case? Victory is always joyful; but to think of such a man, in the hour when, after twelve Hercules' Labors, he does finally triumph! So long he fought with the many-headed coil of Lernean serpents; and, panting, wrestled and wrang with it for life or death, — forty long stern years; and now he has it under his heel! The mountain-tops are scaled, are scaled; where the man climbed, on sharp flinty precipices, slippery, abysmal; in darkness, seen by no kind eye, — amid the brood of dragons; and the heart, many times, was like to fail within him, in his loneliness, in his extreme need: yet he climbed, and climbed, gluing his footsteps in his blood; and now, behold, Hyperion-like he has scaled it, and on the summit shakes his glittering shafts of war! What a scene and new kingdom for him; all bathed in auroral radiance of Hope; far-stretching, solemn, joyful: what wild Memnon's music, from the depths of Nature, comes toning through the soul raised suddenly out of strangling death into victory and life! The very by-stander, we think, might weep, with this Mirabeau, tears of joy.

Which, alas, will become tears of sorrow! For know, O Son of Adam (and Son of Lucifer, with that accursed ambition of thine), that they are all a delusion and piece of demonic necromancy, these same auroral splendors, enchantments and Memnon's tones! The thing thou as mortal wantest is equilibrium, what is called *rest* or *peace;* which, God knows, thou wilt never get *so*. Happy they that find it without such searching. But in some twenty-three months more, of blazing solar splendor and conflagration, this Mirabeau will be ashes; and lie opaque, in the Pantheon of great men (or say, French Pantheon of considerable, or even of considered and small-noisy men), — at rest nowhere, save on the lap of his mother Earth. There are to whom the gods, in their bounty, give glory; but far oftener is it given in wrath, as a curse and a poison; disturbing the whole inner health and industry of the man; leading onward through dizzy staggerings and tarantula jiggings, — towards no saint's shrine. Truly, if Death did not intervene; or still more happily, if Life and the Public were not a blockhead, and sudden unreasonable oblivion were not to follow that sudden unreasonable glory, and beneficently, though most painfully, damp it down, — one sees not where many a poor glorious man, still more many a poor glorious woman could terminate, — far short of Bedlam.

On the 4th day of May, 1789, Madame de Staël, looking from a window in the main street of Versailles, amid an assembled world, as the Deputies walked in procession from the church of Notre-Dame to that of St. Louis, to hear High Mass, and be constituted *States-General*, saw this: "Among these Nobles who had been deputed to the Third Estate, above all others the Comte de Mirabeau. The opinion men had of his genius was singularly augmented by the fear entertained of his immorality; and yet it was this very immorality which straitened the influence his astonishing faculties were to secure him. You could not but look long at this man, when once you had noticed him: his immense black head of hair distinguished him among them all; you would have said his force depended on it, like that of Samson: his face borrowed new expression from its very ugliness; his whole person gave you the idea of an irregular power, but a power such as you would figure in a Tribune of the People."

Mirabeau's history through the first twenty-three months of the Revolution falls not to be written here: yet it is well worth writing somewhere. The Constituent Assembly, when his name was first read out, received it with murmurs; not knowing what they murmured at! This honorable member they were murmuring over was the member of all members; the august Constituent, without him were no Constituent at all. Very notable, truly, is his procedure in this section of world-history; by far the notablest single element there: none like to him, or second to him. Once he is seen visibly to have saved, as with his own force, the existence of the Constituent Assembly; to have turned the whole tide of things: in one of those moments which are cardinal; decisive for centuries. The royal Declaration of the *Twenty-third of June* is promulgated: there is military force enough; there is then the King's express order to disperse, to meet as separate Third Estate on the morrow. Bastilles and scaffolds may be the penalty of disobeying. Mirabeau disobeys; lifts his voice to encourage others, all pallid, panic-stricken, to disobey. Supreme Usher De Brézé enters, with the King's renewed order to depart. "Messieurs," said De Brézé, "you heard the King's order?" The Swallower of Formulas bellows out these words, that have become memorable: "Yes, Monsieur, we heard what the King was advised to say; and you, who cannot be interpreter of his meaning to the States-General; you, who have neither vote, nor seat, nor right of speech here, you are not the man to remind us of it. Go, Monsieur, tell those who sent you, that we are here by will of the Nation; and that nothing but the force of bayonets can drive us hence!" And poor De Brézé vanishes, — back foremost, the *Fils Adoptif* says.

But this, cardinal moment though it be, is perhaps intrinsically among his smaller feats. In general, we would say once more with emphasis, He has "*humé toutes les formules.*" He goes through the Revolution like a substance and a force, not like a formula of one. While innumerable barren Sieyèses and Constitution-pedants are building, with such hammering and trowelling, their august Paper Constitution (which endured eleven months), this man looks not at cobwebs and *Social Contracts*, but at things and men; discerning what is to be done, — proceeding straight to do it. He shivers out Usher De Brézé, back foremost, when that is the problem. "Marie-Antoinette is charmed with him," when it comes to that. He is the man of the Revolution, while he lives; king of it; and only with life, as we compute, would have quitted his kingship of it. Alone of all these Twelve hundred, there is in him the faculty of a king. For, indeed, have we not seen how assiduously Destiny had shaped him all along, as with an express eye to the work now in hand? O crabbed old Friend of Men, whilst thou wert bolting this man into Isles of Rhé, Castles of If, and training him so sharply to be *thy*self, not *him*self, — how little knewest thou *what* thou wert doing! Let us add, that the brave old Marquis lived to see his son's victory over Fate and men, and rejoiced in it; and rebuked Barrel Mirabeau for controverting such a Brother Gabriel. In the invalid chimney-nook at Argenteuil, near Paris, he sat raying out curious observations to the last; and died three days before the Bastille fell, precisely when the *Culbute Générale* was bursting out.

But finally, the twenty-three allotted months are over. Madame de Staël, on the 4th of May, 1789, saw the Roman Tribune of the People, and Samson with his long black hair:

and on the 4th of April, 1791, there is a Funeral Procession extending four miles: king's ministers, senators, national guards, and all Paris, — torchlight, wail of trombones and music, and the tears of men; mourning of a whole people, — such mourning as no modern people ever saw for one man. This Mirabeau's work, then, is done. He sleeps with the primeval giants. He has gone over to the majority: *Abiit ad plures.*

In the way of eulogy and dyslogy, and summing up of character, there may doubtless be a great many things set forth concerning this Mirabeau; as already there has been much discussion and arguing about him, better and worse: which is proper surely; as about all manner of new things, were they much less questionable than this new giant is. The present reviewer, meanwhile, finds it suitabler to restrict himself and his exhausted readers to the three following moral reflections.

Moral reflection *first:* That, in these centuries men are not born demi-gods and perfect characters, but imperfect ones, and mere blamable men; men, namely, environed with such shortcoming and confusion of their own, and then with such adscititious scandal and misjudgment (got in the work they did), that they resemble less demi-gods than a sort of god-devils, — very imperfect characters indeed. The demi-god arrangement were the one which, at first sight, this reviewer might be inclined to prefer.

Moral reflection *second*, however: That probably men were never born demi-gods in any century, but precisely god-devils as we see; certain of whom do become a kind of demi-gods! How many are the men, not censured, misjudged, calumniated only, but tortured, crucified, hung on gibbets, — not as god-devils even, but as devils proper; who have nevertheless grown to seem respectable, or infinitely respectable! For the thing which was *not* they, which was not anything, has fallen away piecemeal; and become avowedly babble and confused shadow, and no-thing: the thing which was they, remains. Depend on it, Harmodius and Aristogiton, as clear as they now look, had illegal plottings, conclaves at the Jacobins'

Church of Athens; and very intemperate things were spoken, and also done. Thus too, Marcus Brutus and the elder Junius, are they not palpable Heroes? Their praise is in all Debating Societies; but didst thou read what the Morning Papers said of those transactions of theirs, the week after? Nay, Old Noll, whose bones were dug up and hung in chains here at home, as the just emblem of himself and his deserts, the offal of creation at that time, — has not he too got to be a very respectable grim bronze-figure, though it is yet only a century and half since; of whom England seems proud rather than otherwise?

Moral reflection *third* and last: That neither thou nor I, good reader, had any hand in the making of this Mirabeau; — else who knows but we had objected, in *our* wisdom? But it was the Upper Powers that made him, without once consulting us; they and not we, so and not otherwise! To endeavor to understand a little what manner of Mirabeau he, so made, might be: this we, according to opportunity, have done; and therefore do now, with a lively satisfaction, take farewell of him, and leave him to prosper as he can.

PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.[1]

[1837.]

It appears to be, if not stated in words, yet tacitly felt and understood everywhere, that the event of these modern ages is the French Revolution. A huge explosion, bursting through all formulas and customs; confounding into wreck and chaos the ordered arrangements of earthly life; blotting out, one may say, the very firmament and skyey loadstars, — though only for a season. Once in the fifteen hundred years such a thing was ordained to come. To those who stood present in the actual midst of that smoke and thunder, the effect might well be too violent: blinding and deafening, into confused exasperation, almost into madness. These on-lookers have played their part, were it with the printing-press or with the battle-cannon, and are departed; their work, such as it was, remaining behind them; — where the French Revolution also remains. And now, for us who have receded to the distance of some half-century, the explosion becomes a thing visible, surveyable: we see its flame and sulphur-smoke blend with the clear air (far *under* the stars); and hear its uproar as part of the sick noise of life, — loud, indeed, yet embosomed too, as all noise is, in the infinite of silence. It is an event which can be looked on; which may still be execrated, still be celebrated and psalmodied; but which it were better now to begin understanding. Really there are innumerable reasons why we ought to know this same French Revolution as it was: of which reasons (apart altogether from that of "Philosophy teaching by Experience," and so forth), is there not the best summary in this one reason, that we so *wish* to know it? Considering the qualities of the matter, one may perhaps reasonably feel that since the time of the Crusades, or earlier, there is no chapter of history so well worth studying.

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[1] London and Westminster Review, No. 9. — *Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution Française; ou Journal des Assemblées Nationales depuis* 1789 *jusqu'en* 1815: *contenant la Narration des Evénemens, les Débats, &c. &c.* (Parliamentary History of the French Revolution; or Journal of the National Assemblies from 1789 to 1815: containing a Narrative of the Occurrences; Debates of the Assemblies; Discussions in the chief Popular Societies, especially in that of the Jacobins; Records of the Commune of Paris; Sessions of the Revolutionary Tribunal; Reports of the leading Political Trials; Detail of the Annual Budgets; Picture of the Moral Movement, extracted from the Newspapers, Pamphlets, &c. of each Period: preceded by an Introduction on the History of France till the Convocation of the States-General.) By P. J. B. Buchez and P. C. Roux. Tomes 1^{er}–23^{me} et seq. Paris, 1833–1836.

Stated or not, we say, this persuasion is tacitly admitted, and acted upon. In these days everywhere you find it one of the most pressing duties for the writing guild, to produce history on history of the French Revolution. In France it would almost seem as if the young author felt that he must make this his proof-shot, and evidence of craftsmanship: accordingly they do fire off *Histoires*, *Précis of Histoires*, *Annales*, *Fastes* (to say nothing of Historical Novels, *Gil Blases*, *Dantons*, *Barnaves*, *Grangeneuves*), in rapid succession, with or without effect. At all events it is curious to look upon; curious to contrast the picturing of the same fact by the men of this generation and position with the picturing of it by the men of the last. From Barruel and Fantin Desodoards to Thiers and Mignet there is a distance! Each individual takes up the Phenomenon according to his own point of vision, to the structure of his optic organs; — gives, consciously, some poor crotchety picture of several things; unconsciously some picture of himself at least. And the Phenomenon, for its part, subsists there, all the while, unaltered; waiting to be pictured as often as you like, its entire meaning not to be compressed into any picture drawn by man.

Thiers's *History*, in ten volumes foolscap-octavo, contains, if we remember rightly, one reference; and that to a book, not to the page or chapter of a book. It has, for these last seven or eight years, a wide or even high reputation; which latter it is as far as possible from meriting. A superficial air of order, of clearness, calm candor, is spread over the work; but inwardly, it is waste, inorganic; no human head that honestly tries can conceive the French Revolution *so.* A critic of our acquaintance undertook, by way of bet, to find four errors per hour in Thiers: he won amply on the first trial or two.[1] And yet readers (we must add), taking all this along with them, may peruse Thiers with comfort in certain circumstances, nay even with profit; for he is a brisk man of his sort; and does tell you much, if you knew nothing.

Mignet's, again, is a much more honestly written book; yet also an eminently unsatisfactory one. His two volumes contain far more meditation and investigation in them than Thiers's ten: their degree of preferability, therefore, is very high; for it may be said: Call a book diffuse, and you call it in all senses bad; the writer could not find the right word to say, and so said many more or less wrong ones; did not hit the nail on the head, only smote and bungled about it and about it. Mignet's book has a compactness, a rigor, as of riveted rods of iron: this also is an image of what symmetry it has; — symmetry, if not of a living earth-born Tree, yet of a firm well-manufactured Gridiron. Without life, without color or verdure: that is to say, Mignet is heartily and altogether a *prosaist;* you are too happy that he is not a *quack* as well! It is very mortifying, also, to study his philosophical reflections; how he jingles and rumbles a quantity of mere abstractions and dead logical formulas, and calls it Thinking; — rumbles and rumbles, till he judges there may be enough; then begins again narrating. As thus: —

"The Constitution of 1791 was made on such principles as had resulted from the ideas and the situation of France. It was the work of the middle class, which chanced to be the strongest then: for, as is well known, whatever force has the lead will fashion the institutions according to its own aims. Now this force, when it belongs to one, is despotism; when to several, it is privilege; when to all, it is right: which latter state is the ultimatum of society, as it was its beginning. France had finally arrived thither, after passing through feudalism, which is the aristocratic institution; and then through absolutism, which is the monarchic one.

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[1] Thiers says, "Notables consented with eagerness" (vol. i. p. 10), whereas they properly did not consent at all; "Parlement recalled on the 10th of September" (for the 15th); and then "Séance Royale took place on the 20th of the same month" (19th of quite a different month, not the same, nor next to the same); "D'Esprémenil a young Counsellor" (of forty and odd); "Duport a young man" (turned of sixty), &c. &c.

"The work of the Constituent Assembly perished, not so much by its own defects as by the assaults of factions. Standing between the aristocracy and the multitude, it was attacked by the former, and stormed and won by the latter. The multitude would never have become supreme, had not civil war and the coalition of foreign states rendered its intervention and help indispensable. To defend the country the multitude required to have the governing of it: thereupon (*alors*) it made *its* revolution, as the middle class had made its. The multitude too had its *Fourteenth of July*, which was the *Tenth of August;* its Constituent, which was the Convention; its Government, which was the Committee of *Salut Public;* but, as we shall see," &c.[1]

Or thus; for there is the like at the end of every chapter:

"But royalty had virtually fallen, on the Tenth of August; that day was the insurrection of the multitude against the middle class and constitutional throne, as the Fourteenth of July had been the insurrection of the middle classes against the privileged classes and an absolute throne. The Tenth of August witnessed the commencement of the dictatorial and arbitrary epoch of the Revolution. Circumstances becoming more and more difficult, there arose a vast war, which required increased energy; and this energy, unregulated, inasmuch as it was popular, rendered the sway of the lower class an unquiet, oppressive and cruel sway. It was not any way possible that the *Bourgeoisie* (middle class), which had been strong enough to strike down the old government and the privileged classes, but which had taken to repose after this victory, could repulse the Emigration and united Europe. There was needed for that a new shock, a new faith; there was needed for that a new Class, numerous, ardent, not yet fatigued, and which loved its Tenth of August, as the Burgherhood loved its Fourteenth of," &c. &c.[1]

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[1] Chap. iv. vol. i. p. 271.

So uncommonly *lively* are these Abstractions (at bottom only occurrences, similitudes, days of the month, and such like), which rumble here in the historical head! Abstractions really of the most lively, insurrectionary character; nay, which produce offspring, and indeed are oftenest parricidally devoured thereby: — such is the jingling and rumbling which calls itself Thinking. Nearly so, though with greater effect, might algebraical x's go rumbling in some Pascal's or Babbage's mill. Just so, indeed, do the Kalmuck people pray: quantities of written prayers are put in some rotary pipkin or calabash (hung on a tree, or going like the small barrel-churn of agricultural districts); this the devotee has only to whirl and churn; so long as he whirls, it is prayer; when he ceases whirling, the prayer is done. Alas, this is a sore error, very generally, among French thinkers of the present time. One ought to add, that Mignet takes his place at the head of that brotherhood of his; that his little book, though abounding too in errors of detail, better deserves what place it has than any other of recent date.

The older Desodoardses, Barruels, Lacretelles, and such like, exist, but will hardly profit much. Toulongeon, a man of talent and integrity, is very vague; often incorrect for an eye-witness; his military details used to be reckoned valuable; but, we suppose, Jomini has eclipsed them now. The Abbé Montgaillard has shrewdness, decision, insight; abounds in anecdotes, strange facts and reports of facts: his book being written in the form of Annals, is convenient for consulting. For the rest, he is acrid, exaggerated, occasionally altogether perverse; and, with his hastes and his hatreds, falls into the strangest hallucination; — as, for example, when he coolly records that "Madame de Staël, Necker's daughter, was seen (*on vit*) distributing brandy to the *Gardes Françaises* in their barracks;" that "D'Orléans Égalité had a pair of *man*-skin breeches," — leather breeches, of human skin, such as they did prepare in the tannery of Meudon, but *too late* for D'Orléans! The history by *Deux Amis de la Liberté*, if the reader secure the original edition, is perhaps worth all the others; and offers (at least till 1792, after which it becomes convulsive, semi-fatuous here and there, in the remaining dozen volumes) the best, correctest, most picturesque narrative yet published. It is very correct, very picturesque; wants only *foreshortening*, shadow and compression; a work of decided merit; the authors of it, what is singular, appear not to be known.

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[1] Chap. v. vol. i. p. 371.

Finally, our English histories do likewise abound: copious if not in facts, yet in reflections on facts. They will prove to the most incredulous that this French Revolution was, as Chamfort said, no "rose-water Revolution;" that the universal insurrectionary abrogation of law and custom was managed in a most unlawful, uncustomary manner. He who wishes to know how a solid *Custos rotulorum*, speculating over his port after dinner, interprets the phenomena of contemporary Universal History, may look in these books: he who does not wish that, need not look.

On the whole, after all these writings and printings, the weight of which would sink an Indiaman, there are, perhaps, only some three publications hitherto that can be considered as forwarding essentially a right knowledge of this matter. The *first* of these is the *Analyse du Moniteur*, complete expository Index, and Syllabus of the Moniteur Newspaper from 1789 to 1799; a work carrying its significance in its title; — provided it be faithfully executed; which it is well known to be. Along with this we may mention the series of Portraits, a hundred in number, published with the original edition of it: many of them understood to be accurate likenesses. The natural face of a man is often worth more than several biographies of him, as biographies are written. These hundred Portraits have been copied into a book called *Scènes de la Révolution*, which contains other pictures, of small value, and some not useless writing by Chamfort; and are often to be found in libraries. A republication of Vernet's Caricatures[1] would be a most acceptable service, but has not been thought of hitherto. The *second* work to be counted here is the *Choix des Rapports, Opinions et Discours,* in some twenty volumes, with an excellent index: parliamentary speeches, reports, &c. are furnished in abundance; complete illustration of all that this Senatorial province (rather a wearisome one) can illustrate. *Thirdly,* we have to name the Collection of *Memoirs,* completed several years ago, in above a hundred volumes. Booksellers Baudouin, Editors Berville and Barrière, have done their utmost; adding notes, explanations, rectifications, with portraits also if you like: *Louvet, Riouffe* and the two volumes of *Memoirs on the Prisons* are the most attractive pieces. This Baudouin Collection, therefore, joins itself to that of Petitot, as a natural sequel.

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[1] See Mercier's *Nouveau Paris*, vol. iv. p. 254.

And now a *fourth* work, which follows in the train of these, and deserves to be reckoned along with them, is this *Histoire Parlementaire* of Messieurs Buchez and Roux. The Authors are men of ability and repute; Buchez, if we mistake not, is Dr. Buchez, and practises medicine with acceptance; Roux is known as an essayist and journalist: they once listened a little to Saint-Simon, but it was before Saint-Simonism called itself "a religion," and vanished in Bedlam. We have understood there is a certain bibliomaniac military gentleman in Paris, who in the course of years has amassed the most astonishing collection of revolutionary ware: books, pamphlets, newspapers, even sheets and handbills, ephemeral printings and paintings, such as the day brought them forth, lie there without end.[1] Into this warehouse, as indeed into all manner of other repositories, Messrs. Buchez and Roux have happily found access: the *Histoire Parlementaire* is the fruit of their labors there. A Number, two forming a Volume, is published every fortnight: we have the first Twenty-two Volumes before us, which bring down the narrative to January, 1793; there must be several other Volumes out, which we have not yet seen.

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[1] It is generally known that a similar collection, perhaps still larger and more curious, lies buried in the British Museum here, — inaccessible for want of a proper catalogue. Some eighteen months ago, the respectable sub-librarian seemed to be working at such a thing: by respectful application to him, you could gain access to his room, and have the satisfaction of mounting on ladders, and reading the outside titles of his books, which was a great help. Otherwise you could not in many weeks ascertain so much as the table of contents of this repository; and after days of weary waiting, dusty rummaging, and sickness of hope deferred, gave up the enterprise as a "game not worth the candle."

Conceive a judicious compilation with such resources. Parliamentary Debates, in summary, or (where the occasion warrants it) given at large; this is by no means the most interesting part of the matter: we have excerpts, notices, hints of all imaginable sorts; of Newspapers, of Pamphlets, of Sectionary and Municipal Records, of the Jacobins' Club, of Placard-journals, nay of Placards and Caricatures. No livelier emblem of the time, in its actual movement and tumult, could be presented. The Editors connect these fragments by expositions such as are needful; so that a reader coming unprepared to the work can still know what he is about. Their expositions, as we can testify, are handsomely done: but altogether apart from these, the excerpts themselves are the valuable thing. The scissors, in such a case, are independent of the pen. One of the most interesting English biographies we have is that long thin Folio on Oliver Cromwell, published some five-and-twenty years ago, where the editor has merely clipt out from the contemporary newspapers whatsoever article, paragraph, or sentence he found to contain the name of Old Noll, and printed them in the order of their dates. It is surprising that the like has not been attempted in other cases. Had seven of the eight Translators of Faust, and seventy-times-seven of the four-hundred-fourscore-and-ten Imaginative Authors, but thrown down the writing-instrument, and turned to the old newspaper files judiciously with the cutting one!

We can testify, after not a little examination, that the Editors of the *Histoire Parlementaire* are men of fidelity, of diligence; that their accuracy in regard to facts, dates and so forth, is far beyond the average. Of course they have their own opinions, prepossessions even; but these are honest prepossessions, which they do not hide; which one can estimate the force of, allow for the result of. Wilful falsification, did the possibility of it lie in their character, is otherwise out of the question. But, indeed, our Editors are men of earnestness, of strict principle; of a faith, were it only in the republican Tricolor. Their democratic faith, truly, is palpable, thorough-going; as it has a right to be, in these days, since it likes. The thing you have to praise, however, is that it is a quiet faith, never an hysterical one; never expresses itself otherwise than with a becoming calmness, especially with a becoming brevity. The hoarse deep croak of Marat, the brilliant sharp-cutting gayety of Desmoulins, the dull bluster of Prudhomme, the cackling garrulity of Brissot, all is welcomed with a cold gravity and brevity; all is illustrative, if not of one thing, then of another. Nor are the royalist Royous, Suleaus, Peltiers forgotten: *Acts of the Apostles*, *King's Friend*, nor *Crowing of the Cock:* these, indeed, are more sparingly administered; but at the right time, as is promised, we shall have more. In a word, it may be said of this *Histoire Parlementaire*, that the wide promise held out in its titlepage is really in some respectable measure fulfilled. With a fit Index to wind it up (which Index ought to be not good only but excellent, so much depends on it here), this Work bids fair to be one of the most important yet published on the History of the Revolution. No library, that professes to have a collection in this sort, can dispense with it.

A *Histoire Parlementaire* is precisely the house, or say rather, the unbuilt city, of which the single brick *can* form a specimen. In so rich a variety, the only difficulty is where to choose. We have scenes of tragedy, of comedy, of farce, of farce-tragedy oftenest of all; there is eloquence, gravity; there is bluster, bombast and absurdity: scenes tender, scenes barbarous, spirit-stirring, and then flatly wearisome: a thing waste, incoherent, wild to look upon; but great with the greatness of reality; for the thing exhibited is no vision, but a fact. Let us, as the first excerpt, give this tragedy of old Foulon, which all the world has heard of, perhaps not very accurately. Foulon's life-drama, with its hasty cruel sayings and mean doings, with its thousand-fold intrigues, and "the people eating grass if they like," ends in this miserable manner. It is the Editors themselves who speak; compiling from various sources: —

"Towards five in the morning (Paris, 22d July, 1789), M. Foulon was brought in; he had been arrested at Vitry, near Fontainebleau, by the peasants of the place. Doubtless this man thought himself very guilty towards the people [say, very hateful]; for he had spread abroad a report of his death; and had even buried one of his servants, who happened to die then, under his own name. He had afterwards hidden himself in an estate of M. de Sartines'; where he was detected and seized.

"M. Foulon was taken to the Hôtel-de-Ville, where they made him wait. Towards nine o'clock, the assembled Committee had decided that he should be sent to the Abbaye prison. M. de Lafayette was sent for, that he might execute this order; he was abroad over the Districts: he could not be found. During this time a crowd collected in the square; and required to see Foulon. It was noon: M. Bailly came down; the people listened to him; but still persisted. In the end they penetrated into the great hall of the Hôtel-de-Ville; would see Foulon, 'whom,' say they, 'you are wanting to smuggle off from justice.' Foulon was presented to them. Then began this remarkable dialogue. M. de la Poize, an Elector: 'Messieurs, every guilty person should be judged.' 'Yes, judged directly, and then hanged.' — M. Osselin: 'To judge, one must have judges; let us send M. Foulon to the tribunals.' 'No, no,' replied the people; 'judge him just now.' — 'Since you will not have the common judges,' said M. Osselin, 'it is indispensable to appoint others.' 'Well, judge him yourselves.' — 'We have no right either to judge or to create judges; do you name them.' 'Well,' cried the people, 'M. le Curé of Saint-Etienne then, and M. le Curé of Saint-André.' — Osselin: 'Two judges are not enough; there needs seven.' Thereupon the people named Messrs. Quatremere, Varangue, &c. 'Here are seven judges indeed,' said Osselin; 'but we still want a clerk.' 'Be you clerk.' — 'A king's Attorney.' 'Let it be M. Duveyrier.' — 'Of what crime is M. Foulon accused?' asked Duveyrier. 'He wished to harass the people; he said he would make them eat grass; he was in the plot; he was for national bankruptcy; he bought up corn.' The two curates then rose, and declared that they refused to judge; the laws of the church not permitting them. 'They are right,' said some. 'They are cozening us,' said others; 'and the prisoner all the while is making his escape.' At these words there rose a frightful tumult in the Hall. 'Messieurs,' said an Elector, 'name four of yourselves to guard him.' Four men accordingly were chosen; sent into the neighboring apartment, where Foulon was. 'But will you judge, then?' cried the crowd. 'Messieurs, you see there are two judges wanting.' — 'We name M. Bailly and M. Lafayette.' 'But M. Lafayette is absent; one must either wait for him, or name some other.' — 'Well then, name directly, and do it yourself.'

"At length the Electors agreed to proceed to judgment; Foulon was again brought in. The foremost part of the crowd joined hands, and formed a chain several ranks deep, in the middle of which he was received. At this moment M. Lafayette came in; went and took his place at the board among the Electors; and then addressed to the people a discourse, of which the *Ami du Roi* and the Records of the Town-hall, the two authorities we borrow from here, give different reports."

Lafayette's speech, according to both versions, is to the effect that Foulon is guilty; but that he doubtless has accomplices; that he must be taken to the Abbaye prison, and investigated there. "Yes, yes, to prison! Off with him, off!" cried the crowd. The *Deux Amis* add another not insignificant circumstance, that poor Foulon himself, hearing this conclusion of Lafayette's, clapped hands; whereupon the crowd said, "See! they are both in a story!" Our Editors continue and conclude: —

"At this moment there rose a great clamor in the square. 'It is the Palais Royal coming,' said one. 'It is the Faubourg Saint-Antoine,' said another. Then a well-dressed person (*homme bien mis*) advanced towards the board, and said, '*Vous vous moquez!* What is the use of judging a man who has been judged these thirty years?' At this word, Foulon was clutched; hurled out to the square; and finally tied to the fatal rope, which hung from the *Lanterne* at the corner of the

Rue de la Vannerie. The rope was afterwards cut; the head was put on a pike, and paraded," — with "grass" in the mouth of it, they might have added![1]

The *Révolutions de France et de Brabant*, Camille Desmoulins's Newspaper, furnishes numerous extracts, in the earlier Volumes; always of a remarkable kind. This *Procureur-Général de la Lanterne* has a place of his own in the history of the Revolution; there are not many notabler persons in it than he. A light harmless creature; as he says of himself, "a man born to write verses;" but whom Destiny directed to overthrow Bastilles, and go to the guillotine for doing that. How such a man will comport himself in a French Revolution, as he from time to time turns up there, is worth seeing. Of loose headlong character; a man stuttering in speech; stuttering, infirm in conduct too, till one huge idea laid hold of him: a man for whom Art, Fortune or himself would never do much, but to whom Nature had been very kind! One meets him always with a sort of forgiveness, almost of underhand love, as for a prodigal son. He has good gifts, and even acquirements; elegant law-scholarship, quick sense, the freest joyful heart: a fellow of endless wit, clearness, soft lambent brilliancy; on any subject you can listen to him, if without approving, yet without yawning. As a writer, in fact, there is nothing French, that we have heard of, superior or equal to him for these fifty years. Probably some French editor, some day or other, will *sift* that journalistic rubbish, and produce out of it, in small neat compass, a *Life and Remains* of this poor Camille. We pick up three light fractions, illustrative of him and of the things he moved in; they relate to the famous Fifth of October (1789), when the women rose in insurrection. The Palais Royal and Marquis Saint-Huruge have been busy on the King's *veto*, and Lally Tollendal's proposal of an upper house: —

"Was the Palais Royal so far wrong," says Camille, "to cry out against such things? I know that the Palais Royal Promenade is strangely miscellaneous; that pickpockets frequently employ the *liberty of the press* there, and many a zealous patriot has lost his handkerchief in the fire of debate. But, for all that, I must bear honorable testimony to the promenaders in this Lyceum and Stoa. The Palais-Royal Garden is the focus of patriotism: there do the chosen patriots rendezvous, who have left their hearths and their provinces to witness this magnificent spectacle of the Revolution of 1789, and not to witness without aiding in it. They are Frenchmen; they have an interest in the Constitution, and a right to concur in it. How many Parisians too, instead of going to their Districts, find it shorter to come at once to the Palais Royal! Here you have not to ask a President if you may speak, and wait two hours till your turn comes. You propose your motion; if it find supporters, they set you on a chair: if you are applauded, you proceed to the redaction; if you are hissed, you go your ways. It is very much the mode the Romans followed; their Forum and our Palais Royal resemble one another."[1]

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[1] Vol. ii. p. 148.

Then, a few days farther on, — the celebrated military dinner at Versailles, with the white cockades, black cockades, and "*O Richard, O mon Roi!*" having been transacted: —

"*Paris, Sunday, 4th October.* The King's Wife had been so gratified with it, that this *brotherly repast* of Thursday must needs be repeated. It was so on the Saturday, and with aggravations. Our patience was worn out: you may suppose whatever patriot observers there were at Versailles hastened to Paris with the news, or at least sent off despatches containing them. That same day (Saturday evening) all Paris set itself astir. It was a lady, first, who, seeing that her husband was not listened to at his District, came to the bar of the Café de Foi, to denounce the anti-national cockades. M. Marat flies to Versailles; returns like lightning; makes a noise like the four blasts of doom, crying to us, Awake, ye dead! Danton, on his side, sounds the alarm in the *Cordeliers.* On Sunday this immortal Cordeliers District posts its manifesto; and that very day they would have gone to Versailles, had not M. Crevecœur, their commandant, stood in the way. People seek out their arms, however; sally out to the streets, in chase of anti-national cockades. The law of reprisals is in force; these cockades are torn off, trampled under foot, with menace of the *Lanterne* in case of relapse. A military gentleman, picking up his cockade, is for fastening it on again: a hundred canes start into the air, saying *Veto*. The whole Sunday passes in hunting down the white and the black cockades; in holding council at the Palais Royal, over the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, at the end of Bridges, on the Quais. At the doors of the coffee-houses, there arise free conferences between the Upper House, of the coats that are within, and the Lower House, of jackets and wool-caps, assembled *extra muros*. It is agreed upon that the audacity of the aristocrats increases rapidly; that Madame Villepatour and the Queen's women are distributing enormous white cockades to all comers in the Œil-de-Bœuf; that M. Lecointre, having refused to take one from their hands, has all but been assassinated. It is agreed upon that we have not a moment to lose; that the boat which used to bring us flour from Corbeil morning and evening, now comes only once in two days: — do they plan to make their attack at the moment when they have kept us for eight-and-forty hours in a fasting state? It is agreed upon," &c.[1]

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[1] Vol. ii. p. 414.

— We hasten to the catastrophe, which arrives on the morrow. It is related elsewhere, in another leading article: —

"At break of day, the women rush towards the Hôtel-de-Ville. All the way, they recruit fresh hands, among their own sex, to march with them; as sailors are recruited at London: there is an active press of women. The Quai de la Ferraille is covered with female crimps. The robust kitchen-maid, the slim mantua-maker, all must go to swell the phalanx; the ancient devotee, tripping to mass in the dawn, sees herself for the first time carried off, and shrieks *Help!* whilst more than one of the younger sort secretly is not so sorry at going, without mother or mistress, to Versailles to pay her respects to the august Assembly. At the same time, for the accuracy of this narrative, I must remark that these women, at least the battalion of them which encamped that night in the Assembly Hall, and had marched under the flag of M. Maillard, had among themselves a Presidentess and Staff; and that every woman, on being borrowed from her mother or husband, was presented to the Presidentess or some of her aides-de-camp, who engaged to watch over her morality, and insure her honor for this day.

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[1] Vol. iii. p. 63.

"Once arrived on the Place de Grève, these women piously begin letting down the *Lanterne;* as in great calamities, you let down the shrine of Saint Geneviève. Next they are for mounting into the Hôtel-de-Ville. The Commandant had been forewarned of this movement; he knew that all insurrections have begun by women, whose maternal bosom the bayonet of the satellites of despotism respects. Four thousand soldiers presented a front bristling with bayonets; kept them back from the step: but behind these women there rose and grew every moment a nucleus of men, armed with pikes, axes, bills; blood is about to flow on the place; the presence of these Sabine women hindered it. The National Guard, which is not purely a machine, as the Minister of War would have the soldier be, makes use of its reason. It discerns that these women, now for Versailles, are going to the root of the mischief. The four thousand Guards, already getting saluted with stones, think it reasonablest to open a passage; and, like waters through a broken dike, the floods of the multitude inundate the Hôtel-de-Ville.

"It is a picture interesting to paint, and one of the greatest in the Revolution, this same army of ten thousand Judiths setting forth to cut off the head of Holofernes; forcing the Hôtel-de-Ville; arming themselves with whatever they can lay hands on; some tying ropes to the cannon-trains, arresting carts, loading them with artillery, with powder and balls for the Versailles National Guard, which is left without ammunition; others driving on the horses, or seated on cannon, holding the redoubtable match; seeking for their generalissimo, not aristocrats with epaulettes, but Conquerors of the Bastille!"[1]

So far Camille on veto, scarcity and the Insurrection of Women, in the end of 1789. As it is not fit that all our scenes should be of tragedy or low-tragedy, the reader will perhaps consent now to a touch of the moral-sublime. Let him enter the Hall of the Jacobins with us. All men have heard of the

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[1] Vol. iii. p. 110.

Jacobins' Club; but not all would think of looking for comedy or the moral-sublime there. Nevertheless so it is. Ah! the sublime of the Jacobins was not always of the *blue*-light pandemonial sort; far otherwise once! We will give this passage from the *Journal of the Jacobins' Debates;* not as one of the best, but as one of the pleasantest for English readers. Fancy that high Hall, with its seats for fifteen hundred, "rising in amphitheatre to the cornice of the dome;" its Tribune elevated to mid-air; Galleries and Ladies' Gallery full; President seated; shrill *Huissiers* perambulating with their rods and liveries, sounding forth "*Silence! Silence!*" Consider that it is the 18th of December, 1791 (free monarchic constitution solemnly accepted six weeks ago); and read:—

"The confluence of strangers was so great that besides the new gallery erected for them, the old ones were quite full, as well as those on the opposite side of the Hall; and nevertheless a great multitude of citizens who could not find room or admittance on any terms.

"The reading of the announcements and select correspondence was scarcely begun, when the Hall resounded with applauses at the entrance of the three united Flags, of the English, the American and French Nation, which were to be placed in the Hall; as the Society of *Friends of the Revolution* in London had placed them in theirs.

"Cries of 'Liberty forever! The Nation forever! The three Free Peoples of the Universe forever (*Vivent les trois peuples libres de l'univers*)!' are re-echoed with enthusiasm by the galleries and visitors: the expression, no less sincere than lively, of that ardor, of that love for Equality and Brotherhood, which Nature has engraved on the hearts of all men; and which nothing but the continued efforts of despots, in all classes, have managed to efface more or less.

"A Deputation of Ladies is introduced; Ladies accustomed to honor the galleries with their presence: they had solicited permission to offer a pledge of their enthusiasm for Liberty to the Constitutional Whig, who came lately to the National Assembly with the congratulation of this class of free Englishmen.

"The Deputation enters, amid the applauses of the meeting: a young Citizeness carries in her hand the Gift of these Ladies, lays it on the President's table, while the Lady-Deputies mount to the Tribune, to pronounce the following discourse.

"*The Lady-speaker.* We are not Roman Dames; we bring no jewels; but a tribute of gratitude for the feelings you have inspired us with. A Constitutional Whig (*Wigh*), a Brother, an Englishman, formed, few days ago, the object of one of your sweetest unitings (*étreintes*). What a charm had that picture! Souls of sensibility were struck with it; our hearts are yet full of emotion (*Applause*). This day you afford to that Brother, and to yourselves, a new enjoyment: you suspend to the dome of our temple three Flags, American, English, French.

"*From all sides.* The Three Nations, *Vivent les trois nations! Vive la Liberté!*

"*Lady-speaker.* The union of the Three free Peoples is to be cemented: forbid not us also, Messieurs, to contribute towards that. Your pure feelings prescribe it for us as a duty. Messieurs, accept a garland. — And you, English Brother, accept another from the hands of innocence: it is the work of sisterhood; friendship gives it you. Receive also, O good Patriot, in the name of the French *Citoyennes* who are here, this Ark of Alliance, which we have brought for our brethren the Constitutional Whigs (*Wighs*): within it are enclosed the Map of France, divided into eighty-three departments; the Cap of Liberty (*Applause*); the Book of the French Constitution; a Civic Crown; some Ears of Wheat (*Applause*); three Flags; a National Cockade; and these words in the two languages, *To live free or die.*

"*The whole Hall.* To live free or die!

"*Lady-speaker.* Let this immortal homage done to Liberty be, for the English and the French, a sacred pledge of their union. Forget not to tell our brothers how you have received it. Let it be deposited with the brotherliest ceremonial! Invite all Englishmen to participate in this family act. Let it be precious to them as Nature herself. — Tell your wives, repeat to your children, that innocent maids, faithful spouses, tender mothers, after having done their household duties, and contributed to make their families and husbands happy, came and made this offering to their Country. Let one cry of gladness peal over Europe; let it roll across the waters to America. Hark! Amid the echoes, Philadelphia and the Far West repeat like us, *Liberty forever!*

"*The whole Hall.* Liberty forever!

"*Lady-speaker.* Tyrants! your enemies declare themselves. Nations will no longer battle with each other; straitly united, they will possess all Languages, and make of them but one Language. Strong in their Freedom they will be inseparable forever.—

"Universal applauses: the Hall resounds long with cries, repeated by the Galleries and the Society, of *Vive la Nation, vive la Liberté!* The Three Nations! The Patriot Women!

"*M. de la Source, Vice-president.* Since Nature has willed that the world should owe to you its sweetest moments, this enthusiasm of yours with which you fill all hearts shall never be lost, never forgotten in the flight of ages: it stands engraved on our hearts in indelible characters.—(*Then turning to the Deputies of the Whigs*) As for you, Brothers, tell your countrymen what we are; tell them that in France the women too can love their country and show themselves worthy of Liberty; tell them that the union, of which you see the emblems, shall be imperishable as the Free Peoples are; that we have henceforth only one sort of bonds, the bonds which unite us to the Free, and that these shall be eternal as virtue.

"*The Whig Deputy.* Mesdames and M. le Président, I really am not prepared to make a speech [how true to the 'leg-of mutton or postprandial style'!]—for really I did not expect such a reception; but I hope you will excuse me. I have written to England, I have described the reception I met with here: I have had answers, but not from our Society, because that requires time; the Society must meet first and then answer.—I wish it were in my power [postprandially !] to express what my heart feels. This feeling towards you is not the work of a day, but indeed that of a year (!), for in August last, our Society wrote to M. Pétion, who, however, assures me that the Letter never reached him; and therefore —"[1]

— and so on, in the postprandial style; bringing down matters to the solid business-level again. Few readers, it is to be expected, have witnessed on the unelastic stage of mere Earth anything so dramatic as this.

We terminate with a scene of a very different complexion, though but some few months farther on, that is to say in *September*, 1792! Félémhesi (anagram for *Méhée Fils*), in his *Vérité toute entière*, a Pamphlet really more veracious than most, thus testifies, after a good deal of preambling: —

"I was going to my post about half-past two [Sunday the 2d of September, tocsins all ringing, and Brunswick just at hand]; I was passing along the Rue Dauphine; suddenly I hear hisses. I look, I observe four hackney-coaches, coming in a train, escorted by the Fédérés of the Departments.

"Each of these coaches contained four persons: they were individuals [priests] arrested in the preceding domiciliary visits. Billaud-Varennes, Procureur-Substitute of the Commune, had just been interrogating them at the Hôtel-de-Ville; and now they were proceeding towards the Abbaye, to be provisionally detained there. A crowd is gathering; the cries and hisses redouble: one of the prisoners, doubtless out of his senses, takes fire at these murmurs, puts his arm over the coach-door, gives one of the Fédérés a stroke over the head with his cane. The Fédéré, in a rage, draws his sabre, springs on the carriage-steps, and plunges it thrice over into the heart of his aggressor. I saw the blood come out in great jets. 'Kill every one of them; they are scoundrels, aristocrats!' cry the people. The Fédérés all draw their sabres, and instantly kill the three companions of the one who had just perished. I saw, at this moment, a young man in a white nightgown stretch himself out of that same carriage: his countenance, expressive but pale and worn, indicated that he was very sick; he had gathered his staggering strength, and, though already wounded, was crying still, '*Grâce, grâce,* Mercy, pardon!'

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[1] Tome, xii. p 379.

but in vain; — a mortal stroke united him to the lot of the others.

"This coach, which was the hindmost, now held nothing but corpses; it had not stopped during the carnage, which lasted about the space of two minutes. The crowd increases, *crescit eundo;* the yells redouble. The coaches are at the Abbaye. The corpses are hurled into the court; the twelve living prisoners dismount to enter the committee-room. Two are sacrificed on alighting; ten succeed in entering. The committee had not had time to put the slightest question, when a multitude, armed with pikes, sabres, swords and bayonets, dashes in, seizes the accused, and kills them. One prisoner, already much wounded, kept hanging by the skirts of a Committee-member, and still struggled against death.

"Three yet remained; one of whom was the Abbé Sicard, Teacher of the Deaf and Dumb. The sabres were already over his head, when Monnot, the watchmaker, flung himself before them, crying, 'Kill me rather, and not this man, who is useful to our country!' These words, uttered with the fire and impetuosity of a generous soul, suspended death. Profiting by this moment of calm, Abbé Sicard and the other two were got conveyed into the back part of the room."

Abbé Sicard, as is well known, survived; and the narrative which he also published exists, — sufficient to prove, among other things, that "Félémhesi" had but two eyes, and his own share of sagacity and heart; that he has *mis*seen, miscounted, and, knowingly or unknowingly, misstated not a little, — as one poor man, in these circumstances, might. Félémhesi continues, we only inverting his arrangement somewhat: —

"Twelve scoundrels, presided by Maillard, with whom they had probably combined this project beforehand, find themselves 'by chance' among the crowd; and now, being well known one to another, they unite themselves 'in the name of the sovereign people,' whether it were of their own private audacity, or that they had secretly received superior orders. They lay hold of the prison-registers, and turn them over; the turnkeys fall a-trembling; the jailer's wife and the jailer faint; the prison is surrounded by furious men; there is shouting, clamoring: the door is assaulted, like to be forced; when one of the Committee-members presents himself at the outer gate, and begs audience: his signs obtain a moment of silence; the doors open, he advances, gets a chair, mounts on it, and speaks: 'Comrades, friends,' said he, 'you are good patriots; your resentment is just. Open war to the enemies of the common good; neither truce nor mercy; it is a war to the death! I feel, like you, that they must all perish. And yet, if you are good citizens, you must love justice. There is not one of you but would shudder at the notion of shedding innocent blood.' 'Yes, yes!' reply the people. — 'Well, then, I ask of you if, without inquiry or investigation, you fling yourselves like mad tigers on your fellowmen — ?' Here the speaker is interrupted by one of the crowd, who, with a bloody sabre in his hand, his eyes glancing with rage, cleaves the press, and refutes him in these terms: 'Tell us, Monsieur le Citoyen, explain to us, then, would the *sacrés gueux* of Prussians and Austrians, if they were at Paris, investigate for the guilty? Would they not cut to the right and left, as the Swiss on the Tenth of August did? Well! I am no speaker, I cannot stuff the ears of any one: but I tell you, I have a wife and five children, whom I leave with my Section here, while I go and fight the enemy; and it is not my bargain that the villains in this Prison, whom other villains outside will open the door to, shall go and kill my wife and children in the mean while! I have three boys, who I hope will be usefuler to their country one day than these rascals you want to save. Any way, you have but to send them out; we will give them arms, and fight them number for number. Die here, or die on the frontiers, I am sure enough to be killed by these villains, one day; but I mean to sell them my life; and, be it I, be it others, the Prison shall be purged of these *sacrés gueux-là*.' 'He is right!' responds the general cry." — And so the frightful "purgation" proceeds.

"At five in the afternoon, Billaud-Varennes, Procureur-Substitute, arrives; he had on his sash, and the small puce coat and black wig we are used to see on him: walking over carcasses, he makes a short harangue to the people, and ends thus: 'People, thou art sacrificing thy enemies; thou art in thy duty.' This cannibal speech lends them new animation. The killers blaze up, cry louder than ever for new victims: — how to stanch this new thirst of blood? A voice speaks from beside Billaud; it was Maillard's voice: 'There is nothing more to do here; let us to the *Carmes!*' They run thither: in five minutes more, I saw them trailing corpses by the heels. A killer (I cannot say a man), in very coarse clothes, had, as it would seem, been specially commissioned to despatch the Abbé Lenfant; for, apprehensive lest the prey might be missed, he takes water, flings it on the corpses, washes their blood-smeared faces, turns them over, and seems at last to ascertain that the Abbé Lenfant is among them."[1]

This is the September Massacre, the last Scene we can give as a specimen. Thus, in these curious records of the *Histoire Parlementaire*, as in some Ezekiel Vision become real, does Scene after Scene disclose itself, now in rose-light, now in sulphurous black, and grow ever more fitful, dreamlike, — till the Vendémiaire Scene come, and Napoleon blow forth his grape-shot, and Sansculottism be no more!

Touching the political and metaphysical speculations of our two Editors, we shall say little. They are of the sort we lamented in Mignet, and generally in Frenchmen of this day: a jingling of formulas; — unfruitful as that Kalmuck prayer! Perhaps the strangest-looking particular doctrine we have noticed is this: that the French Revolution was at bottom an attempt to realize Christianity, and fairly put it in action, in our world. For eighteen centuries (it is not denied) men had been doing more or less that way; but they set their shoulder rightly to the wheel, and gave a dead-lift, for the first time *then*. Good M. Roux! And yet the good Roux does mean something by this; and even something true. But a marginal annotator has written on our copy, "For the love of Heaven, Messieurs, *humez vos formules:*" make away with your formulas; take off your faceted spectacles; open your eyes a little, and look! There is, indeed, here and there, considerable rumbling of the rotatory calabash, which rattles and rumbles, concerning Progress of the Species, *Doctrine du Progrès, Exploitations, le Christ, le Verbe,* and what not; written in a vein of deep, even of intense seriousness; but profitable, one would think, to no man or woman. In this style M. Roux (for it is he, we understand) painfully composes a Preface to each Volume, and has even given a whole introductory History of France: we read some seven or eight of his first Prefaces, hoping always to get some nourishment; but seldom or never cut him open now. Fighting, in that way, behind cover, he is comparatively harmless; merely wasting you so many pence per number: happily the space he takes is small. Whoever wants to form for himself an image of the actual state of French Meditation, and under what surprising shackles a French thinking man of these days finds himself gyved, and mechanized, and reduced to the verge of *zero*, may open M. Roux's Prefaces, and see it as in an expressive summary.

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[1] Vol. xviii. p. 169.

We wish our two French friends all speed in their business; and do again honestly recommend this *Histoire Parlementaire* to any and all of our English friends who take interest in that subject.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.[1]

[1838.]

American Cooper asserts, in one of his books, that there is "an instinctive tendency in men to look at any man who has become distinguished." True, surely: as all observation and survey of mankind, from China to Peru, from Nebuchadnezzar to Old Hickory, will testify! Why do men crowd towards the improved-drop at Newgate, eager to catch a sight? The man about to be hanged is in a distinguished situation. Men crowd to such extent, that Greenacre's is not the only life choked out there. Again, ask of these leathern vehicles, cabriolets, neat-flies, with blue men and women in them, that scour all thoroughfares, Whither so fast? To see dear Mrs. Rigmarole, the distinguished female; great Mr. Rigmarole, the distinguished male! Or, consider that crowning phenomenon, and summary of modern civilization, a *soirée* of lions. Glittering are the rooms, well-lighted, thronged; bright flows their undulatory flood of blonde-gowns and dress-coats, a soft smile dwelling on all faces; for behold there also flow the lions, hovering distinguished: oracles of the age, of one sort or another. Oracles really pleasant to see; whom it is worth while to go and see: look at them, but inquire not of them, depart rather and be thankful. For your lion-*soirée* admits not of speech; there lies the specialty of it. A meeting together of human creatures; and yet (so high has civilization gone) the primary aim of human meeting, that soul might in some articulate utterance unfold itself to soul, can be dispensed with in it. Utterance there is not; nay there is a certain grinning play of tongue-fence, and make-believe of utterance, considerably worse than none. For which reason it has been suggested, with an eye to sincerity and silence in such lion-*soirées*, Might not each lion be, for example, ticketed, as wine-decanters are? Let him carry, slung round him, in such ornamental manner as seemed good, his silver label with name engraved; you lift his label, and read it, with what farther ocular survey you find useful, and speech is not needed at all. O Fenimore Cooper, it is most true there is "an instinctive tendency in men to look at any man that has become distinguished;" and, moreover, an instinctive desire in men to become distinguished and be looked at!

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[1] London and Westminster Review, No. 12. — *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Baronet.* Vols. i.–vi. Edinburgh, 1837.

For the rest, we will call it a most valuable tendency this; indispensable to mankind. Without it, where were star-and-garter, and significance of rank; where were all ambition, money-getting, respectability of gig or no gig; and, in a word, the main impetus by which society moves, the main force by which it hangs together? A tendency, we say, of manifold results; of manifold origin, not ridiculous only, but sublime; — which some incline to deduce from the mere gregarious purblind nature of man, prompting him to run, "as dim-eyed animals do, towards any glittering object, were it but a scoured tankard, and mistake it for a solar luminary," or even "sheep-like, to run and crowd because many *have* already run"! It is indeed curious to consider how men do make the gods that themselves worship. For the most famed man, round whom all the world rapturously huzzas and venerates, as if his like were not, is the same man whom all the world was wont to jostle into the kennels; not a changed man, but in every fibre of him the same man. Foolish world, what went ye out to see? A tankard scoured bright: and do there not lie, of the self-same pewter, whole barrowfuls of tankards, though by worse fortune all still in the dim state?

And yet, at bottom, it is not merely our gregarious sheep-like quality, but something better, and indeed best: what has been called "the perpetual fact of hero-worship:" our inborn sincere love of great men! Not the gilt farthing, for its own sake, do even fools covet; but the gold guinea which they mistake it for. Veneration of great men is perennial in the nature of man; this, in all times, especially in these, is one of the blessedest facts predicable of him. In all times, even in these seemingly so disobedient times, "it remains a blessed fact, so cunningly has Nature ordered it, *that whatsoever man ought to obey, he cannot but obey.* Show the dullest clodpoll, show the haughtiest featherhead, that a soul higher than himself is actually here; were his knees stiffened into brass, he must down and worship." So it has been written; and may be cited and repeated till known to all. Understand it well, this of "hero-worship" was the primary creed, and has intrinsically been the secondary and ternary, and will be the ultimate and final creed of mankind; indestructible, changing in shape, but in essence unchangeable; whereon polities, religions, loyalties, and all highest human interests have been and can be built, as on a rock that will endure while man endures. Such is hero-worship; so much lies in that our inborn sincere love of great men! — In favor of which unspeakable benefits of the reality, what can we do but cheerfully pardon the multiplex ineptitudes of the semblance; cheerfully wish even lion-*soirées,* with labels for their lions or without that improvement, all manner of prosperity? Let hero-worship flourish, say we; and the more and more assiduous chase after gilt farthings while guineas are not yet forthcoming. Herein, at lowest, is proof that guineas exist, that they are believed to exist, and valued. Find great men if you can; if you cannot, still quit not the search; in defect of great men, let there be noted men, in such number, to such degree of intensity as the public appetite can tolerate.

Whether Sir Walter Scott was a great man, is still a question with some; but there can be no question with any one that he was a most noted and even notable man. In this generation there was no literary man with such a popularity in any country; there have only been a few with such, taking in all generations and all countries. Nay, it is farther to be admitted that Sir Walter Scott's popularity was of a select sort rather; not a popularity of the populace. His admirers were at one time almost all the intelligent of civilized countries; and to the last included, and do still include, a great portion of that sort. Such fortune he had, and has continued to maintain for a space of some twenty or thirty years. So long the observed of all observers; a great man, or only a considerable man; here surely, if ever, is a singularly circumstanced, is a "distinguished" man! In regard to whom, therefore, the "instinctive tendency" on other men's part cannot be wanting. Let men look, where the world has already so long looked. And now, while the new, earnestly expected *Life* "by his son-in-law and literary executor" again summons the whole world's attention round him, probably for the last time it will ever be so summoned; and men are in some sort taking leave of a notability, and about to go their way, and commit him to his fortune on the flood of things, — why should not this Periodical Publication likewise publish its thought about him? Readers of miscellaneous aspect, of unknown quantity and quality, are waiting to hear it done. With small inward vocation, but cheerfully obedient to destiny and necessity, the present reviewer will follow a multitude: to do evil or to do no evil, will depend not on the multitude but on himself. One thing he did decidedly wish; at least to wait till the Work were finished: for the Six promised Volumes, as the world knows, have flowed over into a Seventh, which will not for some weeks yet see the light. But the editorial powers, wearied with waiting, have become peremptory; and declare that, finished or not finished, they will have their hands washed of it at this opening of the year. Perhaps it is best. The physiognomy of Scott will not be much altered for us by that Seventh Volume; the prior Six have altered it but little; — as, indeed, a man who has written some two hundred volumes of his own, and lived for thirty years amid the universal speech of friends, must have already left some likeness of himself. Be it as the peremptory editorial powers require.

First, therefore, a word on the *Life* itself. Mr. Lockhart's known powers justify strict requisition in his case. Our verdict in general would be, that he has accomplished the work he schemed for himself in a creditable workmanlike manner. It is true, his notion of what the work was, does not seem to have been very elevated. To picture forth the life of Scott according to any rules of art or composition, so that a reader, on adequately examining it, might say to himself, "There is Scott, there is the physiognomy and meaning of Scott's appearance and transit on this earth; such was he by nature, so did the world act on him, so he on the world, with such result and significance for himself and us:" this was by no manner of means Mr. Lockhart's plan. A plan which, it is rashly said, should preside over every biography! It might have been fulfilled with all degrees of perfection, from that of the *Odyssey* down to *Thomas Ellwood* or lower. For there is no heroic poem in the world but is at bottom a biography, the life of a man: also, it may be said, there is no life of a man, faithfully recorded, but is a heroic poem of its sort, rhymed or unrhymed. It is a plan one would prefer, did it otherwise suit; which it does not, in these days. Seven volumes sell so much dearer than one; are so much easier to write than one. The *Odyssey*, for instance, what were the value of the *Odyssey* sold per sheet? One paper of *Pickwick*; or say, the inconsiderable fraction of one. This, in commercial algebra, were the equation: *Odyssey* equal to *Pickwick* divided by an unknown integer.

There is a great discovery still to be made in Literature, that of paying literary men by the quantity they *do not* write. Nay, in sober truth, is not this actually the rule in all writing; and, moreover, in all conduct and acting? Not what stands aboveground, but what lies unseen *under* it, as the root and subterrene element it sprang from and emblemed forth, determines the value. Under all speech that is good for anything there lies a silence that is better. Silence is deep as Eternity; speech is shallow as Time. Paradoxical does it seem? Woe for the age, woe for the man, quack-ridden, bespeeched, bespouted, blown about like barren Sahara, to whom this world-old truth were altogether strange! — Such we say is the rule, acted on or not, recognized or not; and he who departs from it, what can he do but spread himself into breadth and length, into superficiality and salability; and, except as filigree, become comparatively useless? One thinks, Had but the hogshead of thin wash, which sours in a week ready for the kennels, been *distilled*, been concentrated! Our dear Fenimore Cooper, whom we started with, might, in that way, have given us one *Natty Leatherstocking*, one melodious synopsis of Man and Nature in the West (for it lay in him to do it), almost as a Saint-Pierre did for the Islands of the East; and the hundred Incoherences, cobbled hastily together by order of Colburn and Company, had slumbered in Chaos, as all incoherences ought if possible to do. Verily this same genius of diffuse-writing, of diffuse-acting, is a Moloch; and souls pass through the fire to him, more than enough. Surely, if ever discovery was valuable and needful, it were that above indicated, of paying by the work *not* visibly done! — Which needful discovery we will give the whole projecting, railwaying, knowledge-diffusing, march-of-intellect and otherwise promotive and locomotive societies in the Old and New World, any required length of centuries to make. Once made, such discovery once made, we too will fling cap into the air, and shout, "*Io Pæan!* the Devil *is* conquered;" — and, in the *mean* while, study to think it nothing miraculous that seven biographical volumes are given where one had been better; and that several other things happen, very much as they from of old were known to do, and are like to continue doing.

Mr. Lockhart's aim, we take it, was not that of producing any such high-flown work of art as we hint at: or indeed to do much other than to print, intelligibly bound together by order of time, and by some requisite intercalary exposition, all such letters, documents and notices about Scott as he found lying suitable, and as it seemed likely the world would undertake to read. His Work, accordingly, is not so much a composition, as what we may call a compilation well done. Neither is this a task of no difficulty; this too is a task that may be performed with extremely various degrees of talent: from the *Life and Correspondence of Hannah More*, for instance, up to this *Life of Scott*, there is a wide range indeed! Let us take the Seven Volumes, and be thankful that they are genuine in their kind. Nay, as to that of their being seven and not one, it is right to say that the public so required it. To have done other, would have shown little policy in an author. Had Mr. Lockhart laboriously compressed himself, and instead of well-done compilation, brought out the well-done composition, in one volume instead of seven, which not many men in England are better qualified to do, there can be no doubt but his readers for the time had been immeasurably fewer. If the praise of magnanimity be denied him, that of prudence must be conceded, which perhaps he values more.

The truth is, the work, done in this manner too, was good to have: Scott's Biography, if uncomposed, lies printed and indestructible here, in the elementary state, and can at any time be composed, if necessary, by whosoever has a call to that. As it is, as it was meant to be, we repeat, the work is vigorously done. Sagacity, decision, candor, diligence, good manners, good sense: these qualities are throughout observable. The dates, calculations, statements, we suppose to be all accurate; much laborious inquiry, some of it impossible for another man, has been gone into, the results of which are imparted with due brevity. Scott's letters, not interesting generally, yet never absolutely without interest, are copiously given; copiously, but with selection; the answers to them still more select. Narrative, delineation, and at length personal reminiscences, occasionally of much merit, of a certain rough force, sincerity and picturesqueness, duly intervene. The scattered members of Scott's Life do lie here, and could be disentangled. In a word, this compilation is the work of a manful, clear-seeing, conclusive man, and has been executed with the faculty and combination of faculties the public had a right to expect from the name attached to it.

One thing we hear greatly blamed in Mr. Lockhart: that he has been too communicative, indiscreet, and has recorded much that ought to have lain suppressed. Persons are mentioned, and circumstances, not always of an ornamental sort. It would appear there is far less reticence than was looked for! Various persons, name and surname, have "received pain:" nay the very Hero of the Biography is rendered unheroic; unornamental facts of him, and of those he had to do with, being set forth in plain English: hence "personality," "indiscretion," or worse, "sanctities of private life," &c. &c. How delicate, decent is English Biography, bless its mealy mouth! A Damocles' sword of *Respectability* hangs forever over the poor English Life-writer (as it does over poor English Life in general), and reduces him to the verge of paralysis. Thus it has been said, "there are no English lives worth reading except those of Players, who by the nature of the case have bidden Respectability good-day." The English biographer has long felt that if in writing his Man's Biography, he wrote down anything that could by possibility offend any man, he had written wrong. The plain consequence was, that, properly speaking, no biography whatever could be produced. The poor biographer, having the fear *not* of God before his eyes, was obliged to retire as it were into vacuum; and write in the most melancholy, straitened manner, with only vacuum for a result. Vain that he wrote, and that we kept reading volume on volume: there was no biography, but some vague ghost of a biography, white, stainless; without feature or substance; *vacuum*, as we say, and wind and shadow, — which indeed the material of it was.

No man lives without jostling and being jostled; in all ways he has to *elbow* himself through the world, giving and receiving offence. His life is a battle, in so far as it is an entity at all. The very oyster, we suppose, comes in collision with oysters: undoubtedly enough it does come in collision with Necessity and Difficulty; and helps itself through, not as a perfect ideal oyster, but as an imperfect real one. Some kind of remorse must be known to the oyster; certain hatreds, certain pusillanimities. But as for man, his conflict is continual with the spirit of contradiction, that is without and within; with the evil spirit (or call it, with the weak, most necessitous, pitiable spirit), that is in others and in himself. His walk, like all walking (say the mechanicians), is a series of *falls*. To paint man's life is to represent these things. Let them be represented, fitly, with dignity and measure; but above all, let them be represented. No tragedy of *Hamlet* with the part of Hamlet omitted by particular desire! No ghost of a biography, let the Damocles' sword of Respectability (which, after all, is but a pasteboard one) threaten as it will! One hopes that the public taste is much mended in this matter; that vacuum-biographies, with a good many other vacuities related to them, are withdrawn or withdrawing into vacuum. Probably it was Mr. Lockhart's feeling of what the great public would approve, that led him, open-eyed, into this offence against the small criticising public: we joyfully accept the omen.

Perhaps then, of all the praises copiously bestowed on his Work, there is none in reality so creditable to him as this same censure, which has also been pretty copious. It is a censure better than a good many praises. He is found guilty of having said this and that, calculated not to be entirely pleasant to this man and that; in other words, calculated to give him and the thing he worked in a living set of features, not leave him vague, in the white beatified-ghost condition. Several men, as we hear, cry out, "See, there is something written not entirely pleasant to me!" Good friend, it is pity; but who can help it? They that will crowd about bonfires may, sometimes very fairly, get their beards singed; it is the price they pay for such illumination; natural twilight is safe and free to all. For our part, we hope all manner of biographies that are written in England will henceforth be written so. If it is fit that they be written otherwise, then it is still fitter that they be not written at all: to produce not things but ghosts of things can never be the duty of man.

The biographer has this problem set before him: to delineate a likeness of the earthly pilgrimage of a man. He will compute well what profit is in it, and what disprofit; under which latter head this of offending any of his fellow-creatures will surely not be forgotten. Nay, this may so swell the disprofit side of his account, that many an enterprise of biography, otherwise promising, shall require to be renounced. But once taken up, the rule before all rules is to do *it*, not to do the ghost of it. In speaking of the man and men he has to deal with, he will of course keep all his charities about him; but all his eyes open. Far be it from him to set down aught *untrue;* nay, not to abstain from, and leave in oblivion, much that is true. But having found a thing or things essential for his subject, and well computed the for and against, he will in very deed set down such thing or things, nothing doubting, — *having,* we may say, the fear of God before his eyes, and no other fear whatever. Censure the biographer's prudence; dissent from the computation he made, or agree with it; be all malice of his, be all falsehood, nay be all offensive avoidable inaccuracy, condemned and consumed; but know that by this plan only, executed as was possible, could the biographer hope to make a biography; and blame him not that he did what it had been the worst fault not to do.

As to the accuracy or error of these statements about the Ballantynes and other persons aggrieved, which are questions much mooted at present in some places, we know nothing at all. If they are inaccurate, let them be corrected; if the inaccuracy was avoidable, let the author bear rebuke and punishment for it. We can only say, these things carry no look of inaccuracy on the face of them; neither is anywhere the smallest trace of ill-will or unjust feeling discernible. Decidedly the probabilities are, and till better evidence arise, the fair conclusion is, that this matter stands very much as it ought to do. Let the clatter of censure, therefore, propagate itself as far as it can. For Mr. Lockhart it virtually amounts to this very considerable praise, that, standing full in the face of the public, he has set at nought, and been among the first to do it, a public piece of cant; one of the commonest we have, and closely allied to many others of the fellest sort, as smooth as it looks.

The other censure, of Scott being made unheroic, springs from the same stem; and is, perhaps, a still more wonderful flower of it. Your true hero must have no features, but be white, stainless, an impersonal ghost-hero! But connected with this, there is a hypothesis now current, due probably to some man of name, for its own force would not carry it far:

That Mr. Lockhart at heart has a dislike to Scott, and has done his best in an underhand treacherous manner to dishero him! Such hypothesis is actually current: he that has ears may hear it now and then. On which astonishing hypothesis, if a word must be said, it can only be an apology for silence, —"That there are things at which one stands struck silent, as at first sight of the Infinite." For if Mr. Lockhart is fairly chargeable with any radical defect, if on any side his insight entirely fails him, it seems even to be in this, that Scott is altogether lovely to him; that Scott's greatness spreads out for him on all hands beyond reach of eye; that his very faults become beautiful, his vulgar worldlinesses are solid prudences, proprieties; and of his worth there is no measure. Does not the patient Biographer dwell on his *Abbots*, *Pirates*, and hasty theatrical scene-paintings; affectionately analyzing them, as if they were Raphael-pictures, time-defying *Hamlets*, *Othellos?* The Novel-manufactory, with its £15,000 a year, is sacred to him as creation of a genius, which carries the noble victor up to Heaven. Scott is to Lockhart the unparalleled of the time; an object spreading out before him like a sea without shore. Of *that* astonishing hypothesis, let expressive silence be the only answer.

And so in sum, with regard to *Lockhart's Life of Scott*, readers that believe in us shall read it with the feeling that a man of talent, decision and insight wrote it; wrote it in seven volumes, not in one, because the public would pay for it better in that state; but wrote it with courage, with frankness, sincerity; on the whole, in a very readable, recommendable manner, as things go. Whosoever needs it can purchase it, or purchase the loan of it, with assurance more than usual that he has ware for his money. And now enough of the written *Life;* we will glance a little at the man and his acted life.

Into the question whether Scott was a great man or not, we do not propose to enter deeply. It is, as too usual, a question about words. There can be no doubt but many men have been named and printed *great* who were vastly smaller than he: as little doubt moreover that of the specially *good*, a very large portion, according to any genuine standard of man's worth, were worthless in comparison to him. He for whom Scott is great may most innocently name him so; may with advantage admire his great qualities, and ought with sincere heart to emulate them. At the same time, it is good that there be a certain degree of precision in our epithets. It is good to understand, for one thing, that no popularity, and open-mouthed wonder of all the world, continued even for a long series of years, can make a man great. Such popularity is a remarkable fortune; indicates a great adaptation of the man to his element of circumstances; but may or may not indicate anything great in the man. To our imagination, as above hinted, there is a certain apotheosis in it; but in the reality no apotheosis at all. Popularity is as a blaze of illumination, or alas, of conflagration, kindled round a man; *showing* what is in him; not putting the smallest item more into him; often abstracting much from him; conflagrating the poor man himself into ashes and *caput mortuum!* And then, by the nature of it, such popularity is transient; your "series of years," quite unexpectedly, sometimes almost all on a sudden, terminates! For the stupidity of men, especially of men congregated in masses round any object, is extreme. What illuminations and conflagrations have kindled themselves, as if new heavenly suns had risen, which proved only to be tar-barrels and terrestrial locks of straw! Profane Princesses cried out, "One God, one Farinelli!" — and whither now have they and Farinelli danced?

In Literature too there have been seen popularities greater even than Scott's, and nothing perennial in the interior of them. Lope de Vega, whom all the world swore by, and made a proverb of; who could make an acceptable five-act tragedy in almost as many hours; the greatest of all popularities past or present, and perhaps one of the greatest men that ever ranked among popularities: Lope himself, so radiant, far-shining, has not proved to be a sun or star of the firmament; but is as good as lost and gone out; or plays at best in the eyes of some few as a vague aurora-borealis, and brilliant ineffectuality. The great man of Spain sat obscure at the time, all dark and poor, a maimed soldier; writing his *Don Quixote* in prison. And Lope's fate withal was sad, his popularity perhaps a curse to him; for in this man there was something ethereal too, a divine particle traceable in few other popular men; and such far-shining diffusion of himself, though all the world swore by it, would do nothing for the true life of him even while he lived: he had to creep into a convent, into a monk's cowl, and learn, with infinite sorrow, that his blessedness had lain elsewhere; that when a man's life feels itself to be sick and an error, no voting of by-standers can make it well and a truth again.

Or coming down to our own times, was not August Kotzebue popular? Kotzebue, not so many years since, saw himself, if rumor and hand-clapping could be credited, the greatest man going; saw visibly his Thoughts, dressed out in plush and pasteboard, permeating and perambulating civilized Europe; the most iron visages weeping with him, in all theatres from Cadiz to Kamtchatka; his own "astonishing genius" meanwhile producing two tragedies or so per month: he, on the whole, blazed high enough: he too has gone out into Night and *Orcus*, and already is not. We will omit this of popularity altogether; and account it as making simply nothing towards Scott's greatness or non-greatness, as an accident, not a quality.

Shorn of this falsifying *nimbus*, and reduced to his own natural dimensions, there remains the reality, Walter Scott, and what we can find in him: to be accounted great, or not great, according to the dialects of men. Friends to precision of epithet will probably deny his title to the name "great." It seems to us there goes other stuff to the making of great men than can be detected here. One knows not what idea worthy of the name of great, what purpose, instinct or tendency, that could be called great, Scott ever was inspired with. His life was worldly; his ambitions were worldly. There is nothing spiritual in him; all is economical, material, of the earth earthy. A love of picturesque, of beautiful, vigorous and graceful things; a genuine love, yet not more genuine than has dwelt in hundreds of men named minor poets: this is the highest quality to be discerned in him.

His power of representing these things, too, his poetic power, like his moral power, was a genius *in extenso,* as we may say, not *in intenso.* In action, in speculation, *broad* as he was, he rose nowhere high; productive without measure as to quantity, in quality he for the most part transcended but a little way the region of commonplace. It has been said, "no man has written as many volumes with so few sentences that can be quoted." Winged words were not his vocation; nothing urged him that way: the great Mystery of Existence was not great to him; did not drive him into rocky solitudes to wrestle with it for an answer, to be answered or to perish. He had nothing of the martyr; into no "dark region to slay monsters for us," did he, either led or driven, venture down: his conquests were for his own behoof mainly, conquests over common market-labor, and reckonable in good metallic coin of the realm. The thing he had faith in, except power, power of what sort soever, and even of the rudest sort, would be difficult to point out. One sees not that he believed in anything; nay he did not even disbelieve; but quietly acquiesced, and made himself at home in a world of conventionalities; the false, the semi-false and the true were alike true in this, that they were there, and had power in their hands more or less. It was well to feel so; and yet not well! We find it written, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion;" but surely it is a double woe to them that are at ease in Babel, in Domdaniel. On the other hand, he wrote many volumes, amusing many thousands of men. Shall we call this great? It seems to us there dwells and struggles another sort of spirit in the inward parts of great men!

Brother Ringletub, the missionary, inquired of Ram-Dass, a Hindoo man-god, who had set up for godhood lately, What he meant to do, then, with the sins of mankind? To which Ram-Dass at once answered, He had *fire enough in his belly* to burn up all the sins in the world. Ram-Dass was right so far, and had a spice of sense in him; for surely it is the test of every divine man this same, and without it he is not divine or great, — that he *have* fire in him to burn up somewhat of the sins of the world, of the miseries and errors of the world: why else is he there? Far be it from us to say that a great man must needs, with benevolence prepense. become a "friend of humanity;" nay that such professional self-conscious friends of humanity are not the fatalest kind of persons to be met with in our day. All greatness is unconscious, or it is little and nought. And yet a great man without *such* fire in him, burning dim or developed, as a divine behest in his heart of hearts, never resting till it be fulfilled, were a solecism in Nature. A great man is ever, as the Transcendentalists speak, possessed with an *idea.*

Napoleon himself, not the superfinest of great men, and ballasted sufficiently with prudences and egoisms, had nevertheless, as is clear enough, an idea to start with: the idea that Democracy was the Cause of Man, the right and infinite Cause. Accordingly he made himself "the armed Soldier of Democracy;" and did vindicate it in a rather great manner. Nay, to the very last, he had a kind of idea; that, namely, of "*La carrière ouverte aux talens,* The tools to him that can handle them;" really one of the best ideas yet promulgated on that matter, or rather the one true central idea, towards which all the others, if they tend any-whither, must tend. Unhappily it was in the military province only that Napoleon could realize this idea of his, being forced to fight for himself the while: before he got it tried to any extent in the civil province of things, his head by much victory grew light (no head can stand more than its quantity); and he lost head, as they say, and became a selfish ambitionist and quack, and was hurled out; leaving his idea to be realized, in the civil province of things, by others! Thus was Napoleon; thus are all great men: children of the idea; or, in Ram-Dass's phraseology, furnished with fire to burn up the miseries of men. Conscious or unconscious, latent or unfolded, there is small vestige of any such fire being extant in the inner man of Scott.

Yet on the other hand, the surliest critic must allow that Scott was a genuine man, which itself is a great matter. No affectation, fantasticality or distortion dwelt in him; no shadow of cant. Nay withal, was he not a right brave and strong man, according to his kind? What a load of toil, what a measure of felicity, he quietly bore along with him; with what quiet strength he both worked on this earth, and enjoyed in it; invincible to evil fortune and to good! A most composed invincible man; in difficulty and distress knowing no discouragement, Samson-like carrying off on his strong Samson-shoulders the gates that would imprison him; in danger and menace laughing at the whisper of fear. And then, with such a sunny current of true humor and humanity, a free joyful sympathy with so many things; what of fire he had all lying so beautifully *latent*, as radical latent heat, as fruitful internal warmth of life; a most robust, healthy man! The truth is, our best definition of Scott were perhaps even this, that he was, if no great man, then something much pleasanter to be, a robust, thoroughly healthy and withal very prosperous and victorious man. An eminently well-conditioned man, healthy in body, healthy in soul; we will call him one of the *healthiest* of men.

Neither is this a small matter: health is a great matter, both to the possessor of it and to others. On the whole, that humorist in the Moral Essay was not so far out, who determined on honoring health only; and so instead of humbling himself to the high-born, to the rich and well-dressed, insisted on doffing hat to the healthy: coroneted carriages with pale faces in them passed by as failures, miserable and lamentable; trucks with ruddy-cheeked strength dragging at them were greeted as successful and venerable. For does not health mean harmony, the synonym of all that is true, justly ordered, good; is it not, in some sense, the net-total, as shown by experiment, of whatever worth is in us? The healthy man is a most meritorious product of Nature so far as he goes. A healthy body is good; but a soul in right health, — it is the thing beyond all others to be prayed for; the blessedest thing this earth receives of Heaven. Without artificial medicament of philosophy, or tight-lacing of creeds (always very questionable), the healthy soul discerns what is good, and adheres to it, and retains it; discerns what is bad, and spontaneously casts it off. An instinct from Nature herself, like that which guides the wild animals of the forest to their food, shows him what he shall do, what he shall abstain from. The false and foreign will not adhere to him; cant and all fantastic diseased incrustations are impossible; — as Walker the *Original*, in such eminence of health was *he* for his part, *could* not, by much abstinence from soap-and-water, attain to a dirty face! This thing thou canst work with and profit by, this thing is substantial and worthy; that other thing thou canst not work with, it is trivial and inapt: so speaks unerringly the inward monition of the man's whole nature. No need of logic to prove the most argumentative absurdity absurd; as Goethe says of himself, "all this ran down from me like water from a man in wax-cloth dress." Blessed is the healthy nature; it is the coherent, sweetly co-operative, not incoherent, self-distracting, self-destructive one! In the harmonious adjustment and play of all the faculties, the just balance of oneself gives a just feeling towards all men and all things. Glad light from within radiates outwards, and enlightens and embellishes.

Now all this can be predicated of Walter Scott, and of no British literary man that we remember in these days, to any such extent, — if it be not perhaps of one, the most opposite imaginable to Scott, but his equal in this quality and what holds of it: William Cobbett! Nay there are other similarities, widely different as they two look; nor be the comparison disparaging to Scott: for Cobbett also, as the pattern John Bull of his century, strong as the rhinoceros, and with singular humanities and genialities shining through his thick skin, is a most brave phenomenon. So bounteous was Nature to us; in the sickliest of recorded ages, when British Literature lay all puking and sprawling in Werterism, Byronism, and other Sentimentalism tearful or spasmodic (fruit of internal *wind*), Nature was kind enough to send us two healthy Men, of whom she might still say, not without pride, "These also were made in England; such limbs do I still make there!" It is one of the cheerfulest sights, let the question of its greatness be settled as you will. A healthy nature may or may not be great; but there is no great nature that is not healthy.

Or, on the whole, might we not say, Scott, in the new vesture of the nineteenth century, was intrinsically very much the old fighting Borderer of prior centuries; the kind of man Nature did of old make in that birthland of his? In the saddle, with the foray-spear, he would have acquitted himself as he did at the desk with his pen. One fancies how, in stout *Beardie* of Harden's time, he could have played Beardie's part; and *been* the stalwart buff-belted *terræ filius* he in this late time could only delight to draw. The same stout self-help was in him; the same oak and triple brass round his heart. He too could have fought at Redswire, cracking crowns with the fiercest, if that had been the task; could have harried cattle in Tynedale, repaying injury with compound interest; a right sufficient captain of men. A man without qualms or fantasticalities; a hard-headed, sound-hearted man, of joyous robust temper, looking to the main chance, and fighting direct thitherward; *valde stalwartus homo!* — How much in that case had slumbered in him, and passed away without sign! But indeed, who knows how much slumbers in many men? Perhaps our greatest poets are the *mute* Miltons; the vocals are those whom by happy accident we lay hold of, one here, one there, as it chances, and *make* vocal. It is even a question, whether, had not want, discomfort and distress-warrants been busy at Stratford-on-Avon, Shakspeare himself had not lived killing calves or combing wool! Had the Edial Boarding-school turned out well, we had never heard of Samuel Johnson; Samuel Johnson had been a fat schoolmaster and dogmatic gerund-grinder, and never known that he was more. Nature is rich: those two eggs thou art eating carelessly to breakfast, could they not have been hatched into a pair of fowls, and have covered the whole world with poultry?

But it was not harrying of cattle in Tynedale, or cracking of crowns at Redswire, that this stout Border-chief was appointed to perform. Far other work. To be the song-singer and pleasant tale-teller to Britain and Europe, in the beginning of the artificial nineteenth century; here, and not there, lay his business. Beardie of Harden would have found it very amazing. How he shapes himself to this new element; how he helps himself along in it, makes it too do for him, lives sound and victorious in it, and leads over the marches such a spoil as all the cattle-droves the Hardens ever took were poor in comparison to; this is the history of the life and achievements of *our* Sir Walter Scott, Baronet; — whereat we are now to glance for a little! It is a thing remarkable; a thing substantial; of joyful, victorious sort; not unworthy to be glanced at. Withal, however, a glance here and there will suffice. Our limits are narrow; the thing, were it never so victorious, is not of the sublime sort, nor extremely edifying; there is nothing in it to censure vehemently, nor love vehemently; there is more to wonder at than admire; and the whole secret is not an abstruse one.

Till towards the age of thirty, Scott's life has nothing in it decisively pointing towards Literature, or indeed towards distinction of any kind; he is wedded, settled, and has gone through all his preliminary steps, without symptom of renown as yet. It is the life of every other Edinburgh youth of his station and time. Fortunate we must name it, in many ways. Parents in easy or wealthy circumstances, yet unencumbered with the cares and perversions of aristocracy; nothing eminent in place, in faculty or culture, yet nothing deficient; all around is methodic regulation, prudence, prosperity, kind-heartedness; an element of warmth and light, of affection, industry and burgherly comfort, heightened into elegance; in which the young heart can wholesomely grow. A vigorous health seems to have been given by Nature; yet, as if Nature had said withal, "Let it be a health to express itself by mind, not by body," a lameness is added in childhood; the brave little boy, instead of romping and bickering, must learn to think; or at lowest, what is a great matter, to sit still. No rackets and trundling-hoops for this young Walter; but ballads, history-books and a world of legendary stuff, which his mother and those near him are copiously able to furnish. Disease, which is but superficial, and issues in outward lameness, does not cloud the young existence; rather forwards it towards the expansion it is fitted for. The miserable disease had been one of the internal nobler parts, marring the general organization; under which no Walter Scott could have been forwarded, or with all his other endowments could have been producible or possible. "Nature gives healthy children much; how much! Wise education is a wise unfolding of this; often it unfolds itself better of its own accord."

Add one other circumstance: the place where; namely, Presbyterian Scotland. The influences of this are felt incessantly, they stream in at every pore. "There is a country accent," says La Rochefoucauld, "not in speech only, but in thought, conduct, character and manner of existing, which never forsakes a man." Scott, we believe, was all his days an Episcopalian Dissenter in Scotland; but that makes little to the matter. Nobody who knows Scotland and Scott can doubt but Presbyterianism too had a vast share in the forming of him. A country where the entire people is, or even once has been, laid hold of, filled to the heart with an infinite religious idea, has "made a step from which it cannot retrograde." Thought, conscience, the sense that man is denizen of a Universe, creature of an Eternity, has penetrated to the remotest cottage, to the simplest heart. Beautiful and awful, the feeling of a Heavenly Behest, of Duty god-commanded, over-canopies all life. There is an inspiration in such a people: one may say in a more special sense, "the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Honor to all the brave and true; everlasting honor to brave old Knox, one of the truest of the true! That, in the moment while he and his cause, amid civil broils, in convulsion and confusion, were still but struggling for life, he sent the schoolmaster forth to all corners, and said, "Let the people be taught:" this is but one, and indeed an inevitable and comparatively inconsiderable item in his great message to men. His message, in its true compass, was, "Let men know that they are men; created by God, responsible to God; who work in any meanest moment of time what will last through eternity." It is verily a great message.

Not ploughing and hammering machines, not patent-digesters (never so ornamental) to digest the produce of these: no, in no wise; born slaves neither of their fellow-men, nor of their own appetites; but men! This great message Knox did deliver, with a man's voice and strength; and found a people to believe him.

Of such an achievement, we say, were it to be made once only, the results are immense. Thought, in such a country, may change its form, but cannot go out; the country has attained *majority;* thought, and a certain spiritual manhood, ready for all work that man can do, endures there. It may take many forms: the form of hard-fisted money-getting industry, as in the vulgar Scotchman, in the vulgar New Englander; but as compact developed force and alertness of faculty, it is still there; it may utter itself one day as the colossal Scepticism of a Hume (beneficent this too though painful, wrestling Titan-like through doubt and inquiry towards new belief); and again, some better day, it may utter itself as the inspired Melody of a Burns: in a word, it is there, and continues to manifest itself, in the Voice and the Work of a Nation of hardy endeavoring considering men, with whatever that may bear in it, or unfold from it. The Scotch national character originates in many circumstances; first of all, in the Saxon stuff there was to work on; but next, and beyond all else except that, in the Presbyterian Gospel of John Knox. It seems a good national character; and on some sides not so good. Let Scott thank John Knox, for he owed him much, little as he dreamed of debt in that quarter! No Scotchman of his time was more entirely Scotch than Walter Scott: the good and the not so good, which all Scotchmen inherit, ran through every fibre of him.

Scott's childhood, school-days, college-days, are pleasant to read of, though they differ not from those of others in his place and time. The memory of him may probably enough last till this record of them become far more curious than it now is. "So lived an Edinburgh Writer to the Signet's son in the end of the eighteenth century," may some future Scotch novelist say to himself in the end of the twenty-first! The following little fragment of infancy is all we can extract. It is from an Autobiography which he had begun, which one cannot but regret he did not finish. Scott's best qualities never shone out more freely than when he went upon anecdote and reminiscence. Such a master of narrative and of himself could have done personal narrative well. Here, if anywhere, his knowledge was complete, and all his humor and good-humor had free scope: —

"An odd incident is worth recording. It seems, my mother had sent a maid to take charge of me, at this farm of Sandy-Knowe, that I might be no inconvenience to the family. But the damsel sent on that important mission had left her heart behind her, in the keeping of some wild fellow, it is likely, who had done and said more to her than he was like to make good. She became extremely desirous to return to Edinburgh; and, as my mother made a point of her remaining where she was, she contracted a sort of hatred at poor me, as the cause of her being detained at Sandy-Knowe. This rose, I suppose, to a sort of delirious affection; for she confessed to old Alison Wilson, the housekeeper, that she had carried me up to the craigs under a strong temptation of the Devil to cut my throat with her scissors, and bury me in the moss. Alison instantly took possession of my person, and took care that her confidant should not be subject to any farther temptation, at least so far as I was concerned. She was dismissed of course, and I have heard afterwards became a lunatic.

"It is here, at Sandy-Knowe, in the residence of my paternal grandfather, already mentioned, that I have the first consciousness of existence; and I recollect distinctly that my situation and appearance were a little whimsical. Among the odd remedies recurred to, to aid my lameness, some one had recommended that so often as a sheep was killed for the use of the family, I should be stripped, and swathed up in the skin warm as it was flayed from the carcass of the animal. In this Tartar-like habiliment I well remember lying upon the floor of the little parlor in the farm-house, while my grandfather, a venerable old man with white hair, used every excitement to make me try to crawl. I also distinctly remember the late Sir George M'Dougal of Mackerstown, father of the present Sir Henry Hay M'Dougal, joining in the attempt. He was, God knows how, a relation of ours; and I still recollect him, in his old-fashioned military habit (he had been Colonel of the Greys), with a small cocked-hat deeply laced, an embroidered scarlet waistcoat, and a light-colored coat, with milk-white locks tied in a military fashion, kneeling on the ground before me, and dragging his watch along the carpet to induce me to follow it. The benevolent old soldier, and the infant wrapped in his sheepskin, would have afforded an odd group to uninterested spectators. This must have happened about my third year (1774), for Sir George M'Dougal and my grandfather both died shortly after that period."[1]

We will glance next into the "*Liddesdale Raids.*" Scott has grown up to be a brisk-hearted jovial young man and Advocate: in vacation-time he makes excursions to the Highlands, to the Border Cheviots and Northumberland; rides free and far, on his stout galloway, through bog and brake, over the dim moory Debatable Land, — over Flodden and other fields and places, where, though he yet knew it not, his work lay. No land, however dim and moory, but either has had or will have its poet, and so become not unknown in song. Liddesdale, which was once as prosaic as most dales, having now attained illustration, let us glance thitherward: Liddesdale too is on this ancient Earth of ours, under this eternal Sky; and gives and takes, in the most incalculable manner, with the Universe at large! Scott's experiences there are rather of the rustic Arcadian sort; the element of whiskey not wanting. We should premise that here and there a feature has, perhaps, been aggravated for effect's sake: —

"During seven successive years," writes Mr. Lockhart (for the Autobiography has long since left us), "Scott made a *raid*, as he called it, into Liddesdale with Mr. Shortreed, sheriff-substitute of Roxburgh, for his guide; exploring every rivulet to its source, and every ruined *peel* from foundation to battlement. At this time no wheeled carriage had ever been seen in the district; — the first, indeed, was a gig, driven by Scott himself for a part of his way, when on the last of these seven excursions. There was no inn nor public-house of any kind in the whole valley; the travellers passed from the shepherd's hut to the minister's manse, and again from the cheerful hospitality of the manse to the rough and jolly welcome of the homestead; gathering, wherever they went, songs and tunes, and occasionally more tangible relics of antiquity, — even such a 'rowth of auld knicknackets' as Burns ascribes to Captain Grose. To these rambles Scott owed much of the materials of his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border;* and not less of that intimate acquaintance with the living manners of these unsophisticated regions, which constitutes the chief charm of one of the most charming of his prose works. But how soon he had any definite object before him in his researches seems very doubtful. 'He was *makin' himsell* a' the time,' said Mr. Shortreed; 'but he didna ken maybe what he was about till years had passed: at first he thought o' little, I dare say, but the queerness and the fun.'

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[1] Vol. i. pp. 15–17.

"'In those days,' says the Memorandum before me, 'advocates were not so plenty — at least about Liddesdale;' and the worthy Sheriff-substitute goes on to describe the sort of bustle, not unmixed with alarm, produced at the first farm-house they visited (Willie Elliot's at Millburnholm), when the honest man was informed of the quality of one of his guests. When they dismounted, accordingly, he received Mr. Scott with great ceremony, and insisted upon himself leading his horse to the stable. Shortreed accompanied Willie, however; and the latter, after taking a deliberate peep at Scott, 'out by the edge of the door-cheek,' whispered, 'Weel, Robin, I say, de'il hae me if I 's be a bit feared for him now; he 's just a chield like ourselves, I think.' Half a dozen dogs of all degrees had already gathered round 'the advocate,' and his way of returning their compliments had set Willie Elliot at once at his ease.

"According to Mr. Shortreed, this good man of Millburnholm was the great original of Dandie Dinmont. . . . They dined at Millburnholm; and, after having lingered over Willie Elliot's punch-bowl, until, in Mr. Shortreed's phrase, they were 'half-glowrin',' mounted their steeds again, and proceeded to Dr. Elliot's at Cleughhead, where ('for,' says my Memorandum, 'folk werena very nice in those days') the two travellers slept in one and the same bed, — as, indeed, seems to have been the case with them throughout most of their excursions in this primitive district. Dr. Elliot (a clergyman) had already a large MS. collection of the ballad sScott was in quest of. . . . Next morning they seem to have ridden a long way for the express purpose of visiting one 'auld Thomas o' Tuzzilehope,' another Elliot, I suppose, who was celebrated for his skill on the Border pipe, and in particular for being in possession of the real *lilt*[1] of *Dick o' the Cowe.* Before starting, that is, at six o'clock, the ballad-hunters had, 'just to lay the stomach, a devilled duck or twae and some *London* porter.' Auld Thomas found them, nevertheless, well disposed for 'breakfast' on their arrival at Tuzzilehope; and this being over, he delighted them with one of the most hideous and unearthly of all specimens of 'riding music,' and, moreover, with considerable libations of whiskey-punch, manufactured in a certain wooden vessel, resembling a very small milkpail, which he called 'Wisdom,' because it 'made' only a few spoonfuls of spirits, — though he had the art of replenishing it so adroitly, that it had been celebrated for fifty years as more fatal to sobriety than any bowl in the parish. Having done due honor to 'Wisdom,' they again mounted, and proceeded over moss and moor to some other equally hospitable master of the pipe. 'Ah me,' says Shortreed, 'sic an endless fund o' humor and drollery as he then had wi' him! Never ten yards but we were either laughing or roaring and singing. Wherever we stopped, how brawlie he suited himsell to everybody! He aye did as the lave did; never made himsell the great man, or took ony airs in the company. I 've seen him in a' moods in these jaunts, grave and gay, daft and serious, sober and drunk — (this, however, even in our wildest rambles, was rare) — but, drunk or sober, he was aye the gentleman. He lookit excessively heavy and stupid when he was *fou,* but he was never out o' gude humor.'"

These are questionable doings, questionably narrated; but what shall we say of the following, wherein the element of whiskey plays an extremely prominent part? We will say that it *is* questionable, and not exemplary, whiskey mounting clearly beyond its level; that indeed charity hopes and conjectures here may be some aggravating of features for effect's sake!

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[1] Loud tune: German, *lallen.*

"On reaching, one evening, some *Charlieshope* or other (I forget the name) among those wildernesses, they found a kindly reception, as usual; but, to their agreeable surprise after some days of hard living, a measured and orderly hospitality as respected liquor. Soon after supper, at which a bottle of elderberry-wine alone had been produced, a young student of divinity, who happened to be in the house, was called upon to take the 'big ha' Bible,' in the good old fashion of 'Burns's Saturday Night;' and some progress had been already made in the service, when the good-man of the farm, whose 'tendency,' as Mr. Mitchell says, 'was soporific,' scandalized his wife and the dominie by starting suddenly from his knees, and, rubbing his eyes, with a stentorian exclamation of 'By ——, here's the keg at last!' and in tumbled, as he spoke the word, a couple of sturdy herdsmen, whom, on hearing a day before of the advocate's approaching visit, he had despatched to a certain smuggler's haunt, at some considerable distance, in quest of a supply of *run* brandy from the Solway Frith. The pious 'exercise' of the household was hopelessly interrupted. With a thousand apologies for his hitherto shabby entertainment, this jolly Elliot, or Armstrong, had the welcome *keg* mounted on the table without a moment's delay; and gentle and simple, not forgetting the dominie, continued carousing about it until daylight streamed in upon the party. Sir Walter Scott seldom failed, when I saw him in company with his Liddesdale companion, to mimic with infinite humor the sudden outburst of his old host on hearing the clatter of horses' feet, which he knew to indicate the arrival of the keg — the consternation of the dame — and the rueful despair with which the young clergyman closed the book."[1]

From which Liddesdale *raids*, which we here, like the young clergyman, close not without a certain rueful despair, let the reader draw what nourishment he can. They evince satisfactorily, though in a rude manner, that in those days young advocates, and Scott like the rest of them, were *alive* and alert, — whiskey sometimes preponderating. But let us now fancy that the jovial young Advocate has pleaded his first cause; has served in yeomanry drills; been wedded, been promoted Sheriff, without romance in either case; dabbling a little the while, under guidance of Monk Lewis, in translations from the German, in translation of Goethe's *Götz with the Iron Hand;* — and we have arrived at the threshold of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and the opening of a new century.

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[1] Vol. i. pp. 195–199.

Hitherto, therefore, there has been made out, by Nature and Circumstance working together, nothing unusually remarkable, yet still something very valuable; a stout effectual man of thirty, full of broad sagacity and good-humor, with faculties in him fit for any burden of business, hospitality and duty, legal or civic: — with what other faculties in him no one could yet say. As indeed, who, after lifelong inspection, can say what is in any man? The uttered part of a man's life, let us always repeat, bears to the unuttered unconscious part a small unknown proportion; he himself never knows it, much less do others. Give him room, give him *impulse;* he reaches down to the Infinite with that so straitly imprisoned soul of his; and *can* do miracles if need be! It is one of the comfortablest truths that great men abound, though in the unknown state. Nay, as above hinted, our greatest, being also by nature our *quietest*, are perhaps those that remain unknown! Philosopher Fichte took comfort in this belief, when from all pulpits and editorial desks, and publications periodical and stationary, he could hear nothing but the infinite chattering and twittering of commonplace become ambitious; and in the infinite stir of motion no-whither, and of din which should have been silence, all seemed churned into one tempestuous yeasty froth, and the stern Fichte almost desired "taxes on knowledge" to allay it a little; — he comforted himself, we say, by the unshaken belief that Thought did still exist in Germany; that thinking men, each in his own corner, were verily doing their work, though in a silent latent manner.[1]

Walter Scott, as a latent Walter, had never amused all men for a score of years in the course of centuries and eternities, or gained and lost several hundred thousand pounds sterling by Literature; but he might have been a happy and by no means a useless, — nay, who knows at bottom whether not a still usefuler Walter! However, that was not his fortune. The Genius of rather a singular age, — an age at once destitute of faith and terrified at scepticism, with little knowledge of its whereabout, with many sorrows to bear or front, and on the whole with a life to lead in these new circumstances, — had said to himself: What man shall be the temporary comforter, or were it but the spiritual comfit-maker, of this my poor singular age, to solace its dead tedium and manifold sorrows a little? So had the Genius said, looking over all the world. What man? and found him walking the dusty Outer Parliament-house of Edinburgh, with his advocate-gown on his back; and exclaimed, That is he!

The *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* proved to be a well from which flowed one of the broadest rivers. Metrical Romances (which in due time pass into Prose Romances); the old life of men resuscitated for us: it is a mighty word! Not as dead tradition, but as a palpable presence, the past stood before us. There they were, the rugged old fighting men; in their doughty simplicity and strength, with their heartiness, their healthiness, their stout self-help, in their iron basnets, leather jerkins, jack-boots, in their quaintness of manner and costume; there as they looked and lived: it was like a new-discovered continent in Literature; for the new century, a bright El Dorado, — or else some fat beatific land of Cockaigne, and Paradise of Donothings. To the opening nineteenth century, in its languor and paralysis, nothing could have been welcomer. Most unexpected, most refreshing and exhilarating; behold our new El Dorado; our fat beatific Lubberland, where one can enjoy and do nothing! It was the time for such a new Literature; and this Walter Scott was the man for it. The *Lays*, the *Marmions*, the *Ladys* and *Lords* of Lake and Isles, followed in quick succession, with ever-widening profit and praise. How many thousands of guineas were paid down for each new Lay; how many thousands of copies (fifty and more sometimes) were printed off, then and subsequently; what complimenting, reviewing, renown and apotheosis there was: all is recorded in these Seven Volumes, which will be valuable in literary statistics. It is a history, brilliant, remarkable; the outlines of which are known to all. The reader shall recall it, or conceive it. No blaze in his fancy is likely to mount higher than the reality did.

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[1] Fichte, *Über das Wesen des Gelehrten.*

At this middle period of his life, therefore, Scott, enriched with copyrights, with new official incomes and promotions, rich in money, rich in repute, presents himself as a man in the full career of success. "Health, wealth, and wit to guide them" (as his vernacular Proverb says), all these three are his. The field is open for him, and victory there; his own faculty, his own self, unshackled, victoriously unfolds itself, — the highest blessedness that can befall a man. Wide circle of friends, personal loving admirers; warmth of domestic joys, vouchsafed to all that can true-heartedly nestle down among them; light of radiance and renown given only to a few: who would not call Scott happy? But the happiest circumstance of all is, as we said above, that Scott had in himself a right healthy soul, rendering him little dependent on outward circumstances. Things showed themselves to him not in distortion or borrowed light or gloom, but as they were. Endeavor lay in him and endurance, in due measure; and clear vision of what was to be endeavored after. Were one to preach a Sermon on Health, as really were worth doing, Scott ought to be the text. Theories are demonstrably true in the way of logic; and then in the way of practice they prove true or else not true: but here is the grand experiment, Do they turn out well? What boots it that a man's creed is the wisest, that his system of principles is the superfinest, if, when set to work, the life of him does nothing but jar, and fret itself into *holes?* They are untrue in that, were it in nothing else, these principles of his; openly convicted of untruth; — fit only, shall we say, to be rejected as counterfeits, and flung to the dogs? We say not that; but we do say, that ill-health, of body or of mind, is *defeat*, is battle (in a good or in a bad cause) with bad success; that health alone is victory. Let all men, if they can manage it, contrive to be healthy! He who in what cause soever sinks into pain and disease, let him take thought of it; let him know well that it is not good *he* has arrived at yet, but surely evil, — may, or may not be, on the way towards good.

Scott's healthiness showed itself decisively in all things, and nowhere more decisively than in this: the way in which he took his fame! the estimate he from the first formed of fame. Money will buy money's worth; but the thing men call fame, what is it? A gaudy emblazonry, not good for much, — except, indeed, as it too may turn to money. To Scott it was a profitable pleasing superfluity, no necessary of life. Not necessary, now or ever! Seemingly without much effort, but taught by Nature, and the instinct which instructs the sound heart what is good for it and what is not, he felt that he could always do without this same emblazonry of reputation; that he ought to put no trust in it; but be ready at any time to see it pass away from him, and to hold on his way as before. It is incalculable, as we conjecture, what evil he escaped in this manner; what perversions, irritations, mean agonies without a name, he lived wholly apart from, knew nothing of. Happily before fame arrived, he had reached the mature age at which all this was easier to him. What a strange Nemesis lurks in the felicities of men! In thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey, in thy belly it shall be bitter as gall! Some weakly organized individual, we will say at the age of five-and-twenty, whose main or whole talent rests on some prurient susceptivity, and nothing under it but shallowness and vacuum, is clutched hold of by the general imagination, is whirled aloft to the giddy height; and taught to believe the divine-seeming message that he is a great man: such individual seems the luckiest of men: and, alas, is he not the unluckiest? Swallow not the Circe-draught, O weakly organized individual; it is fell poison; it will dry up the fountains of thy whole existence, and all will grow withered and parched; thou shalt be wretched under the sun!

Is there, for example, a sadder book than that *Life of Byron* by Moore? To omit mere prurient susceptivities that rest on vacuum, look at poor Byron, who really had much substance in him. Sitting there in his self-exile, with a proud heart striving to persuade itself that it despises the entire created Universe; and far off, in foggy Babylon, let any pitifulest whipster draw pen on him, your proud Byron writhes in torture, — as if the pitiful whipster were a magician, or his pen a galvanic wire struck into the Byron's spinal marrow! Lamentable, despicable, — one had rather be a kitten and cry mew! O son of Adam, great or little, according as thou art lovable, those thou livest with will love thee. Those thou livest *not* with, is it of moment that they have the alphabetic letters of thy name engraved on their memory, with some signpost likeness of thee (as like as I to Hercules) appended to them? It is not of moment; in sober truth, not of any moment at all! And yet, behold, there is no soul now whom thou canst love freely, — from *one* soul only art thou always sure of reverence enough; in presence of no soul is it rightly well with thee! How is thy world become desert; and thou, for the sake of a little babblement of tongues, art poor, bankrupt, insolvent not in purse, but in heart and mind! "The Golden Calf of self-love," says Jean Paul, "has grown into a burning Phalaris' Bull, to consume its owner and worshipper." Ambition, the desire of shining and outshining, was the beginning of Sin in this world. The man of letters who founds upon his fame, does he not thereby alone declare himself a follower of Lucifer (named *Satan*, the Enemy), and member of the Satanic school? ——

It was in this poetic period that Scott formed his connection with the Ballantynes; and embarked, though under cover, largely in trade. To those who regard him in the heroic light, and will have *Vates* to signify Prophet as well as Poet, this portion of his biography seems somewhat incongruous.

Viewed as it stood in the reality, as he was and as it was, the enterprise, since it proved so unfortunate, may be called lamentable, but cannot be called unnatural. The practical Scott, looking towards practical issues in all things, could not but find hard cash one of the most practical. If by any means cash could be honestly produced, were it by writing poems, were it by printing them, why not? Great things might be done ultimately; great difficulties were at once got rid of, — manifold higglings of booksellers, and contradictions of sinners hereby fell away. A printing and bookselling speculation was not so alien for a maker of books. Voltaire, who indeed got no copyrights, made much money by the war-commissariat, in his time; we believe, by the victualling branch of it. St. George himself, they say, was a dealer in bacon in Cappadocia. A thrifty man will help himself towards his object by such steps as lead to it. Station in society, solid power over the good things of this world, was Scott's avowed object; towards which the precept of precepts is that of Iago, *Put money in thy purse.*

Here, indeed, it is to be remarked, that perhaps no literary man of any generation has less value than Scott for the immaterial part of his mission in any sense: not only for the fantasy called fame, with the fantastic miseries attendant thereon; but also for the spiritual purport of his work, whether it tended hitherward or thitherward, or had any tendency whatever; and indeed for all purports and results of his working, except such, we may say, as offered themselves to the eye, and could, in one sense or the other, be handled, looked at and buttoned into the breeches-pocket. Somewhat too little of a fantast, this *Vates* of ours! But so it was: in this nineteenth century, our highest literary man, who immeasurably beyond all others commanded the world's ear, had, as it were, no message whatever to deliver to the world; wished not the world to elevate itself, to amend itself, to do this or to do that, except simply pay him for the books he kept writing. Very remarkable; fittest, perhaps, for an age fallen languid, destitute of faith and terrified at scepticism? Or, perhaps, for quite another sort of age, an age all in peaceable triumphant motion? Be this as it may, surely since Shakspeare's time there has been no great speaker so unconscious of an aim in speaking as Walter Scott. Equally unconscious these two utterances; equally the sincere complete products of the minds they came from: and now if they were equally *deep?* Or, if the one was living fire, and the other was futile phosphorescence and mere resinous fire-work? It will depend on the relative worth of the minds; for both were equally spontaneous, both equally expressed themselves unencumbered by an ulterior aim. Beyond drawing audiences to the Globe Theatre, Shakspeare contemplated no result in those plays of his. Yet they have had results! Utter with free heart what thy own *dæmon* gives thee: if fire from heaven, it shall be well; if resinous fire-work, it shall be — as well as it could be, or better than otherwise!

The candid judge will, in general, require that a speaker, in so extremely serious a Universe as this of ours, have something to speak about. In the heart of the speaker there ought to be some kind of gospel-tidings, burning till it be uttered; otherwise it were better for him that he altogether held his peace. A gospel somewhat more decisive than this of Scott's, — except to an age altogether languid, without either scepticism or faith! These things the candid judge will demand of literary men; yet withal will recognize the great worth there is in Scott's honesty if in nothing more, in his being the thing he was with such entire good faith. Here is a something, not a nothing. If no sky-born messenger, heaven looking through his eyes; then neither is it a chimera with his systems, crotchets, cants, fanaticisms, and "last infirmity of noble minds," — full of misery, unrest and ill-will; but a substantial, peaceable, terrestrial man. Far as the Earth is under the Heaven does Scott stand below the former sort of character; but high as the cheerful flowery Earth is above waste Tartarus does he stand above the latter. Let him live in his own fashion, and do honor to him in that.

It were late in the day to write criticisms on those Metrical Romances: at the same time, we may remark, the great popularity they had seems natural enough. In the first place, there was the indisputable impress of worth, of genuine human force, in them. This, which lies in some degree, or is thought to lie, at the bottom of all popularity, did to an unusual degree disclose itself in these rhymed romances of Scott's. Pictures were actually painted and presented; human emotions conceived and sympathized with. Considering what wretched Della-Cruscan and other vamping up of old worn-out tatters was the staple article then, it may be granted that Scott's excellence was superior and supreme. When a Hayley was the main singer, a Scott might well be hailed with warm welcome. Consider whether the *Loves of the Plants,* and even the *Loves of the Triangles,* could be worth the loves and hates of men and women! Scott was as preferable to what he displaced, as the substance is to wearisomely repeated shadow of a substance.

But, in the second place, we may say that the *kind* of worth which Scott manifested was fitted especially for the then temper of men. We have called it an age fallen into spiritual languor, destitute of belief, yet terrified at scepticism; reduced to live a stinted half-life, under strange new circumstances. Now vigorous whole-life, this was what of all things these delineations offered. The reader was carried back to rough strong times, wherein those maladies of ours had not yet arisen. Brawny fighters, all cased in buff and iron, their hearts too sheathed in oak and triple brass, caprioled their huge war-horses, shook their death-doing spears; and went forth in the most determined manner, nothing doubting. The reader sighed, yet not without a reflex solacement: "Oh that I too had lived in those times, had never known these logic-cobwebs, this doubt, this sickliness; and been and felt myself alive among men alive!" Add lastly, that in this new-found poetic world there was no call for effort on the reader's part; what excellence they had, exhibited itself at a glance. It was for the reader, not the El Dorado only, but a beatific land of Cockaigne and Paradise of Donothings! The reader, what the vast majority of readers so long to do, was allowed to lie down at his ease, and be ministered to. What the Turkish bathkeeper is said to aim at with his frictions, and shampooings, and fomentings, more or less effectually, that the patient in total idleness may have the delights of activity, — was here to a considerable extent realized. The languid imagination fell back into its rest; an artist was there who could supply it with high-painted scenes, with sequences of stirring action, and whisper to it, Be at ease, and let thy tepid element be comfortable to thee. "The rude man," says a critic, "requires only to see something going on. The man of more refinement must be made to feel. The man of complete refinement must be made to reflect."

We named the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* the fountain from which flowed this great river of Metrical Romances; but according to some they can be traced to a still higher, obscurer spring; to Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen with the Iron Hand;* of which, as we have seen, Scott in his earlier days executed a translation. Dated a good many years ago, the following words in a criticism on Goethe are found written; which probably are still new to most readers of this Review: —

"The works just mentioned, *Götz* and *Werter*, though noble specimens of youthful talent, are still not so much distinguished by their intrinsic merits as by their splendid fortune. It would be difficult to name two books which have exercised a deeper influence on the subsequent literature of Europe than these two performances of a young author; his first-fruits, the produce of his twenty-fourth year. *Werter* appeared to seize the hearts of men in all quarters of the world, and to utter for them the word which they had long been waiting to hear. As usually happens too, this same word, once uttered, was soon abundantly repeated; spoken in all dialects, and chanted through all notes of the gamut, till the sound of it had grown a weariness rather than a pleasure. Sceptical sentimentality, view-hunting, love, friendship, suicide and desperation, became the staple of literary ware; and though the epidemic, after a long course of years, subsided in Germany, it reappeared with various modifications in other countries, and everywhere abundant traces of its good and bad effects are still to be discerned. The fortune of *Berlichingen with the Iron Hand*, though less sudden, was by no means less exalted. In his own country, *Götz*, though he now stands solitary and childless, became the parent of an innumerable progeny of chivalry plays, feudal delineations, and poetico-antiquarian performances; which, though long ago deceased, made noise enough in their day and generation: and with ourselves his influence has been perhaps still more remarkable. Sir Walter Scott's first literary enterprise was a translation of *Götz von Berlichingen:* and, if genius could be communicated like instruction, we might call this work of Goethe's the prime cause of *Marmion* and the *Lady of the Lake*, with all that has followed from the same creative hand. Truly, a grain of seed that has lighted in the right soil! For if not firmer and fairer, it has grown to be taller and broader than any other tree; and all the nations of the earth are still yearly gathering of its fruit."

How far *Götz von Berlichingen* actually affected Scott's literary destination, and whether without it the rhymed romances, and then the prose romances of the Author of Waverley, would not have followed as they did, must remain a very obscure question; obscure, and not important. Of the fact, however, there is no doubt, that these two tendencies, which may be named *Götzism* and *Werterism*, of the former of which Scott was representative with us, have made, and are still in some quarters making the tour of all Europe. In Germany too there was this affectionate half-regretful looking back into the Past; Germany had its buff-belted watch-tower period in literature, and had even got done with it before Scott began. Then as to *Werterism*, had not we English our Byron and his genus? No form of Werterism in any other country had half the potency; as our Scott carried Chivalry Literature to the ends of the world, so did our Byron Werterism. France, busy with its Revolution and Napoleon, had little leisure at the moment for Götzism or Werterism; but it has had them both since, in a shape of its own: witness the whole "Literature of Desperation" in our own days; the beggarliest form of Werterism yet seen, probably its expiring final form: witness also, at the other extremity of the scale, a noble-gifted Chateaubriand, Götz and Werter both in one.—Curious: how all Europe is but like a set of parishes of the same county; participant of the self-same influences, ever since the Crusades, and earlier; — and these glorious wars of ours are but like parish-brawls, which begin in mutual ignorance, intoxication and boastful speech; which end in broken windows, damage, waste and bloody noses; and which one hopes the general good sense is now in the way towards putting down, in some measure!

But leaving this to be as it can, what it concerned us here to remark, was that British Werterism, in the shape of those Byron Poems, so potent and poignant, produced on the languid appetite of men a mighty effect. This too was a "class of feelings deeply important to modern minds; feelings which arise from *passion incapable of being converted into action*, which belong to an age as indolent, cultivated and unbelieving as our own!" The "languid age without either faith or scepticism" turned towards Byronism with an interest altogether peculiar: here, if no cure for its miserable paralysis and languor, was at least an indignant statement of the misery; an indignant Ernulphus' curse read over it, — which all men felt to be something. Half-regretful lookings into the Past gave place, in many quarters, to Ernulphus' cursings of the Present. Scott was among the first to perceive that the day of Metrical Chivalry Romances was declining. He had held the sovereignty for some half-score of years, a comparatively long lease of it; and now the time seemed come for dethronement, for abdication: an unpleasant business; which however he held himself ready, as a brave man will, to transact with composure and in silence. After all, Poetry was not his staff of life; Poetry had already yielded him much money; *this* at least it would not take back from him. Busy always with editing, with compiling, with multiplex official commercial business, and solid interests, he beheld the coming change with unmoved eye.

Resignation he was prepared to exhibit in this matter; — and now behold there proved to be no need of resignation. Let the Metrical Romance become a Prose one; shake off its rhyme-fetters, and try a wider sweep! In the spring of 1814 appeared *Waverley;* an event memorable in the annals of British Literature: in the annals of British Bookselling thrice and four times memorable. Byron sang, but Scott narrated; and when the song had sung itself out through all variations onwards to the *Don Juan* one, Scott was still found narrating, and carrying the whole world along with him. All bygone popularity of chivalry-lays was swallowed up in a far greater. What "series" followed out of *Waverley*, and how and with what result, is known to all men; was witnessed and watched with a kind of rapt astonishment by all. Hardly any literary reputation ever rose so high in our Island; no reputation at all ever spread so wide. Walter Scott became Sir Walter Scott, Baronet, of Abbotsford; on whom Fortune seemed to pour her whole cornucopia of wealth, honor and worldly good; the favorite of Princes and of Peasants, and all intermediate men. His "Waverley series," swift-following one on the other apparently without end, was the universal reading; looked for like an annual harvest, by all ranks, in all European countries.

A curious circumstance superadded itself, that the author though known was unknown. From the first, most people suspected, and soon after the first, few intelligent persons much doubted, that the Author of *Waverley* was Walter Scott. Yet a certain mystery was still kept up; rather piquant to the public; doubtless very pleasant to the author, who saw it all; who probably had not to listen, as other hapless individuals often had, to this or the other long-drawn "clear proof at last," that the author was not Walter Scott, but a certain astonishing Mr. So-and-so; — one of the standing miseries of human life in that time. But for the privileged Author, it was like a king travelling incognito. All men know that he is a high king, chivalrous Gustaf or Kaiser Joseph; but he mingles in their meetings without cumber of etiquette or lonesome ceremony, as Chevalier du Nord, or Count of Lorraine: he has none of the weariness of royalty, and yet all the praise, and the satisfaction of hearing it with his own ears. In a word, the Waverley Novels circulated and reigned triumphant; to the general imagination the "Author of *Waverley*" was like some living mythological personage, and ranked among the chief wonders of the world.

How a man lived and demeaned himself in such unwonted circumstances, is worth seeing. We would gladly quote from Scott's correspondence of this period; but that does not much illustrate the matter. His letters, as above stated, are never without interest, yet also seldom or never very interesting. They are full of cheerfulness, of wit and ingenuity; but they do not treat of aught intimate; without impeaching their sincerity, what is called sincerity, one may say they do not, in any case whatever, proceed from the innermost parts of the mind. Conventional forms, due consideration of your own and your correspondent's pretensions and vanities, are at no moment left out of view. The epistolary stream runs on, lucid, free, glad-flowing; but always, as it were, *parallel* to the real substance of the matter, never coincident with it. One feels it hollowish under foot. Letters they are of a most humane man of the world, even exemplary in that kind; but with the man of the world always visible in them; — as indeed it was little in Scott's way to speak, perhaps even with himself, in any other fashion. We select rather some glimpses of him from Mr. Lockhart's record. The first is of dining with Royalty or Prince-Regentship itself; an almost official matter: —

"On hearing from Mr. Croker (then Secretary to the Admiralty) that Scott was to be in town by the middle of March (1815), the Prince said, 'Let me know when he comes, and I'll get up a snug little dinner that will suit him;' and, after he had been presented and graciously received at the *levee*, he was invited to dinner accordingly, through his excellent friend Mr. Adam (now Lord Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court in Scotland), who at that time held a confidential office in the royal household. The Regent had consulted with Mr. Adam, also, as to the composition of the party. 'Let us have,' said he, 'just a few friends of his own, and the more Scotch the better;' and both the Commissioner and Mr. Croker assure me that the party was the most interesting and agreeable one in their recollection. It comprised, I believe, the Duke of York — the Duke of Gordon (then Marquess of Huntly) — the Marquess of Hertford (then Lord Yarmouth) — the Earl of

Fife — and Scott's early friend, Lord Melville. 'The Prince and Scott,' says Mr. Croker, 'were the two most brilliant story-tellers, in their several ways, that I have ever happened to meet; they were both aware of their *forte*, and both exerted themselves that evening with delightful effect. On going home, I really could not decide which of them had shone the most. The Regent was enchanted with Scott, as Scott with him; and on all his subsequent visits to London, he was a frequent guest at the royal table.' The Lord Chief Commissioner remembers that the Prince was particularly delighted with the poet's anecdotes of the old Scotch judges and lawyers, which his Royal Highness sometimes *capped* by ludicrous traits of certain ermine sages of his own acquaintance. Scott told, among others, a story, which he was fond of telling, of his old friend the Lord Justice-Clerk Braxfield; and the commentary of his Royal Highness on hearing it amused Scott, who often mentioned it afterwards. The anecdote is this: Braxfield, whenever he went on a particular circuit, was in the habit of visiting a gentleman of good fortune in the neighborhood of one of the assize towns, and staying at least one night, which, being both of them ardent chess-players, they usually concluded with their favorite game. One Spring circuit the battle was not decided at daybreak; so the Justice-Clerk said, 'Weel, Donald, I must e'en come back this gate, and let the game lie ower for the present:' and back he came in October, but not to his old friend's hospitable house; for that gentleman had in the interim been apprehended on a capital charge (of forgery), and his name stood on the *Porteous Roll*, or list of those who were about to be tried under his former guest's auspices. The laird was indicted and tried accordingly, and the jury returned a verdict of *guilty*. Braxfield forthwith put on his cocked-hat (which answers to the black cap in England), and pronounced the sentence of the law in the usual terms — 'To be hanged by the neck until you be dead; and may the Lord have mercy upon your unhappy soul!' Having concluded this awful formula in his most sonorous cadence, Braxfield, dismounting his formidable beaver, gave a familiar nod to his unfortunate acquaintance, and said to him in a sort of chuckling whisper, 'And now, Donald my man, I think I've checkmated you for ance.' The Regent laughed heartily at this specimen of Macqueen's brutal humor; and 'I' faith, Walter,' said he, 'this old big-wig seems to have taken things as coolly as my tyrannical self. Don't you remember Tom Moore's description of me at breakfast —

> "The table spread with tea and toast,
> Death-warrants and the *Morning Post*?"

"Towards midnight, the Prince called for 'a bumper, with all the honors, to the Author of Waverley;' and looked significantly, as he was charging his own glass, to Scott. Scott seemed somewhat puzzled for a moment, but instantly recovering himself, and filling his glass to the brim, said, 'Your Royal Highness looks as if you thought I had some claim to the honors of this toast. I have no such pretensions; but shall take good care that the real Simon Pure hears of the high compliment that has now been paid him.' He then drank off his claret; and joined with a stentorian voice in the cheering, which the Prince himself timed. But before the company could resume their seats, his Royal Highness, 'Another of the same, if you please, to the Author of Marmion, — and now, Walter my man, I have checkmated you for *ance*.' The second bumper was followed by cheers still more prolonged: and Scott then rose, and returned thanks in a short address, which struck the Lord Chief Commissioner as 'alike grave and graceful.' This story has been circulated in a very perverted shape. . . . Before he left town he again dined at Carlton House, when the party was a still smaller one than before, and the merriment if possible still more free. That nothing might be wanting, the Prince sang several capital songs."[1]

Or take, at a very great interval in many senses, this glimpse of another dinner, altogether *un*officially and much better described. It is James Ballantyne the printer and publisher's dinner, in St. John Street, Canongate, Edinburgh, on the birth-eve of a Waverley Novel: —

"The feast was, to use one of James's own favorite epithets,

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[1] Vol. iii. pp. 340–343.

gorgeous; an aldermanic display of turtle and venison, with the suitable accompaniments of iced punch, potent ale, and generous Madeira. When the cloth was drawn, the burly præses arose, with all he could muster of the port of John Kemble, and spouted with a sonorous voice the formula of Macbeth, —

> "Fill full!
> I drink to the general joy of the whole table!"

This was followed by 'the King, God bless him!' and second came — 'Gentlemen, there is another toast which never has been nor shall be omitted in this house of mine: I give you the health of Mr. Walter Scott, with three times three!' All honor having been done to this health, and Scott having briefly thanked the company, with some expressions of warm affection to their host, Mrs. Ballantyne retired; — the bottles passed round twice or thrice in the usual way; and then James rose once more, every vein on his brow distended; his eyes solemnly fixed on vacancy, to propose, not as before in his stentorian key, but with ''bated breath,' in the sort of whisper by which a stage-conspirator thrills the gallery, — '*Gentlemen, a bumper to the immortal Author of Waverley!*' — The uproar of cheering, in which Scott made a fashion of joining, was succeeded by deep silence; and then Ballantyne proceeded —

> 'In his Lord Burleigh look, serene and serious,
> A something of imposing and mysterious' —

to lament the obscurity, in which his illustrious but too modest correspondent still chose to conceal himself from the plaudits of the world; to thank the company for the manner in which the *nominis umbra* had been received; and to assure them that the Author of Waverley would, when informed of the circumstance, feel highly delighted — 'The proudest hour of his life,' &c., &c. The cool, demure fun of Scott's features during all this mummery was perfect; and Erskine's attempt at a gay *nonchalance* was still more ludicrously meritorious. Aldiborontiphoscophornio, however, bursting as he was, knew too well to allow the new Novel to be made the subject of discussion. Its name was announced, and success to it crowned another cup; but after that, no more of Jedediah. To cut the thread, he rolled out unbidden some one of his many theatrical songs, in a style that would have done no dishonor to almost any orchestra — *The Maid of Lodi*, or perhaps *The Bay of Biscay, O!* — or *The sweet little cherub that sits up aloft.* Other toasts followed, interspersed with ditties from other performers; old George Thomson, the friend of Burns, was ready, for one, with *The Moorland Wedding*, or *Willie brew'd a peck o' maut;* — and so it went on, until Scott and Erskine, with any clerical or very staid personage that had chanced to be admitted, saw fit to withdraw. Then the scene was changed. The claret and olives made way for broiled bones and a mighty bowl of punch; and when a few glasses of the hot beverage had restored his powers, James opened *ore rotundo* on the merits of the forthcoming Romance. 'One chapter — one chapter only!' was the cry. After '*Nay, by'r Lady, nay!*' and a few more coy shifts, the proof-sheets were at length produced, and James, with many a prefatory hem, read aloud what he considered as the most striking dialogue they contained.

"The first I heard so read was the interview between Jeanie Deans, the Duke of Argyle and Queen Caroline, in Richmond Park; and, notwithstanding some spice of the pompous tricks to which he was addicted, I must say he did the inimitable scene great justice. At all events, the effect it produced was deep and memorable: and no wonder that the exulting typographer's *one bumper more to Jedediah Cleishbotham* preceded his parting-stave, which was uniformly *The Last Words of Marmion*, executed certainly with no contemptible rivalry of Braham."[1]

Over at Abbotsford things wear a still more prosperous aspect. Scott is building there, by the pleasant banks of the Tweed; he has bought and is buying land there; fast as the new gold comes in for a new Waverley Novel, or even faster, it changes itself into moory acres, into stone, and hewn or planted wood: —

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[1] Vol. iv. pp. 166–168.

"About the middle of February" (1820), says Mr. Lockhart, "it having been ere that time arranged that I should marry his eldest daughter in the course of the spring, — I accompanied him and part of his family on one of those flying visits to Abbotsford, with which he often indulged himself on a Saturday during term. Upon such occasions, Scott appeared at the usual hour in court, but wearing, instead of the official suit of black, his country morning-dress, green jacket and so forth, under the clerk's gown." — "At noon, when the Court broke up, Peter Mathieson was sure to be in attendance in the Parliament Close; and, five minutes after, the gown had been tossed off; and Scott, rubbing his hands for glee, was under weigh for Tweedside. As we proceeded," &c.

"Next morning there appeared at breakfast John Ballantyne, who had at this time a shooting or hunting-box a few miles off, in the vale of the Leader, and with him Mr. Constable, his guest; and it being a fine clear day, as soon as Scott had read the church-service and one of Jeremy Taylor's sermons, we all sallied out before noon on a perambulation of his upland territories; Maida (the hound) and the rest of the favorites accompanying our march. At starting we were joined by the constant henchman, Tom Purdie, — and I may save myself the trouble of any attempt to describe his appearance, for his master has given us an inimitably true one in introducing a certain personage of his Redgauntlet: — 'He was, perhaps, sixty years old; yet his brow was not much furrowed, and his jet-black hair was only grizzled, not whitened, by the advance of age. All his motions spoke strength unabated; and, though rather undersized, he had very broad shoulders, was square-made, thin-flanked, and apparently combined in his frame muscular strength and activity; the last somewhat impaired, perhaps, by years, but the first remaining in full vigor. A hard and harsh countenance; eyes far sunk under projecting eyebrows, which were grizzled like his hair; a wide mouth, furnished from ear to ear with a range of unimpaired teeth of uncommon whiteness, and a size and breadth which might have become the jaws of an ogre, completed this delightful portrait.' Equip this figure in Scott's cast-off green jacket, white hat and drab trousers; and imagine that years of kind treatment, comfort and the honest consequence of a confidential *grieve*[1] had softened away much of the hardness and harshness originally impressed on the visage by anxious penury, and the sinister habits of a *black-fisher;* — and the Tom Purdie of 1820 stands before us.

"We were all delighted to see how completely Scott had recovered his bodily vigor, and none more so than Constable, who, as he puffed and panted after him, up one ravine and down another, often stopped to wipe his forehead, and remarked, that 'it was not every author who should lead him such a dance.' But Purdie's face shone with rapture as he observed how severely the swag-bellied bookseller's activity was tasked. Scott exclaimed exultingly, though, perhaps, for the tenth time, 'This will be a glorious spring for our trees, Tom!' — 'You may say that, Sheriff,' quoth Tom, — and then lingering a moment for Constable — 'My certy,' he added, scratching his head, 'and I think it will be a grand season for *our buiks* too.' But indeed Tom always talked of *our buiks*, as if they had been as regular products of the soil as *our aits* and *our birks*. Having threaded first the Hexilcleugh and then the Rhymer's Glen, we arrived at Huntly Burn, where the hospitality of the kind *Weird Sisters*, as Scott called the Miss Fergusons, reanimated our exhausted bibliopoles, and gave them courage to extend their walk a little farther down the same famous brook. Here there was a small cottage in a very sequestered situation [named Chiefswood], by making some little additions to which Scott thought it might be converted into a suitable summer residence for his daughter and future son-in-law. . . . As we walked homeward, Scott being a little fatigued, laid his left hand on Tom's shoulder and leaned heavily for support, chatting to his 'Sunday pony,' as he called the affectionate fellow, just as freely as with the rest of the party; and Tom put in his word shrewdly and manfully, and grinned and grunted whenever the joke chanced to be within his apprehension. It was easy to see that his heart swelled within him from the moment the Sheriff got his collar in his gripe."[2]

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[1] Overseer; German, *graf.*

[2] Vol. iv. pp. 349–353.

That Abbotsford became infested to a great degree with tourists, wonder-hunters, and all that fatal species of people, may be supposed. Solitary Ettrick saw itself populous: all paths were beaten with the feet and hoofs of an endless miscellany of pilgrims. As many as "sixteen parties" have arrived at Abbotsford in one day; male and female; peers, Socinian preachers, whatsoever was distinguished, whatsoever had love of distinction in it! Mr. Lockhart thinks there was no literary shrine ever so bepilgrimed, except Ferney in Voltaire's time, who, however, was not half so accessible. A fatal species! These are what Schiller calls "the flesh-flies;" buzzing swarms of bluebottles, who never fail where any taint of human glory or other corruptibility is in the wind. So has Nature decreed. Scott's *healthiness*, bodily and mental, his massive solidity of character, nowhere showed itself more decisively than in his manner of encountering this part of his fate. That his bluebottles were blue, and of the usual tone and quality, may be judged. Hear Captain Basil Hall (in a very compressed state): —

"We arrived in good time, and found several other guests at dinner. The public rooms are lighted with oil-gas, in a style of extraordinary splendor. The" &c. — "Had I a hundred pens, each of which at the same time should separately write down an anecdote, I could not hope to record one-half of those which our host, to use Spenser's expression, 'welled out alway.'" — "Entertained us all the way with an endless string of anecdotes;" "came like a stream of poetry from his lips;" — "path muddy and scarcely passable, yet I do not remember ever to have seen any place so interesting as the skill of this mighty magician had rendered this narrow ravine." — "Impossible to touch on any theme, but straightway he has an anecdote to fit it." — "Thus we strolled along, borne, as it were, on the stream of song and story." — "In the evening we had a great feast indeed. Sir Walter asked us if we had ever read Christabel." — "Interspersed with these various readings were some hundreds of stories, some quaint, some pathetical." — "At breakfast to-day we had, as usual, some 150 stories — God knows how they came in." — "In any man so gifted — so qualified to take the loftiest, proudest line at the head of the literature, the taste, the imagination of the whole world!" — "For instance, he never sits at any particular place at table, but takes," &c. &c.[1]

Among such worshippers, arriving in "sixteen parties a day," an ordinary man might have grown buoyant; have felt the god, begun to nod, and seemed to shake the spheres. A slightly splenetic man, possessed of Scott's sense, would have swept his premises clear of them: Let no bluebottle approach here, to disturb a man in his work, — under pain of sugared *squash* (called quassia) and king's yellow! The good Sir Walter, like a quiet brave man, did neither. He let the matter take its course; enjoyed what was enjoyable in it; endured what could not well be helped; persisted meanwhile in writing his daily portion of romance-*copy*, in preserving his composure of heart; — in a word, accommodated himself to this loud-buzzing environment, and made it serve him, as he would have done (perhaps with more ease) to a silent, poor and solitary one. No doubt it affected him too, and in the lamentablest way fevered his internal life, though he kept it well down; but it affected him *less* than it would have done almost any other man. For his guests were not all of the bluebottle sort; far from that. Mr. Lockhart shall furnish us with the brightest aspect a British Ferney ever yielded, or is like to yield: and therewith we will quit Abbotsford and the dominant and culminant period of Scott's life: —

"It was a clear, bright September morning, with a sharpness in the air that doubled the animating influence of the sunshine, and all was in readiness for a grand coursing-match on Newark Hill. The only guest who had chalked out other sport for himself was the stanchest of anglers, Mr. Rose; but he too was there on his *shelty*, armed with his salmon-rod and landing-net, and attended by his Hinves, and Charlie Purdie, a brother of Tom, in those days the most celebrated fisherman of the district. This little group of Waltonians, bound for Lord Somerville's preserve, remained lounging about, to witness the start of the main cavalcade. Sir Walter, mounted on Sibyl, was marshalling the order of procession with a huge hunting-whip; and among a dozen frolicsome youths and maidens, who seemed disposed to laugh at all discipline, appeared, each on horseback, each as eager as the youngest sportsman in the troop, Sir Humphry Davy, Dr. Wollaston, and the patriarch of Scottish belles-lettres, Henry Mackenzie. The Man of Feeling, however, was persuaded with some difficulty to resign his steed for the present to his faithful negro follower, and to join Lady Scott in the sociable, until we should reach the ground of our *battue.* Laidlaw, on a strong-tailed wiry Highlander, yclept *Hoddin Grey*, which carried him nimbly and stoutly, although his feet almost touched the ground as he sat, was the adjutant. But the most picturesque figure was the illustrious inventor of the safety-lamp. He had come for his favorite sport of angling, and had been practising it successfully with Rose, his travelling companion, for two or three days preceding this; but he had not prepared for coursing fields, or had left Charlie Purdie's troop for Sir Walter's on a sudden thought, and his fisherman's costume — a brown hat with flexible brim, surrounded with line upon line of catgut, and innumerable fly-hooks — jack-boots worthy of a Dutch smuggler, and a fustian surtout dabbled with the blood of salmon, made a fine contrast with the smart jackets, white-cord breeches, and well-polished jockey-boots of the less distinguished cavaliers about him. Dr. Wollaston was in black; and with his noble serene dignity of countenance might have passed for a sporting archbishop. Mr. Mackenzie, at this time in the 76th year of his age, with a white hat turned up with green, green spectacles, green jacket, and long brown leathern gaiters buttoned upon his nether anatomy, wore a dog-whistle round his neck, and had, all over, the air of as resolute a devotee as the gay captain of Huntly Burn. Tom Purdie and his subalterns had preceded us by a few hours with all the greyhounds that could be collected at Abbotsford, Darnick, and Melrose; but the giant Maida had remained as his master's orderly, and now gambolled about Sibyl Grey, barking for mere joy like a spaniel puppy.

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[1] Vol. v. pp 375–402.

"The order of march had been all settled, and the sociable was just getting under weigh, when *the Lady Anne* broke from the line, screaming with laughter, and exclaimed, 'Papa, papa, I knew you could never think of going without your pet!' Scott looked round, and I rather think there was a blush as well as a smile upon his face, when he perceived a little black pig frisking about his pony, and evidently a self-elected addition to the party of the day. He tried to look stern, and cracked his whip at the creature, but was in a moment obliged to join in the general cheers. Poor piggy soon found a strap round its neck, and was dragged into the background;—Scott, watching the retreat, repeated with mock pathos the first verse of an old pastoral song—

'"What will I do gin my hoggie die?
  My joy, my pride, my hoggie!
My only beast, I had na mae,
  And wow! but I was vogie!"'

—the cheers were redoubled—and the squadron moved on.

"This pig had taken, nobody could tell how, a most sentimental attachment to Scott, and was constantly urging its pretensions to be admitted a regular member of his *tail* along with the greyhounds and terriers: but, indeed, I remember him suffering another summer under the same sort of pertinacity on the part of an affectionate hen. I leave the explanation for philosophers;—but such were the facts. I have too much respect for the vulgarly calumniated donkey, to name him in the same category of pets with the pig and the hen; but a year or two after this time, my wife used to drive a couple of these animals in a little garden-chair, and whenever her father appeared at the door of our cottage, we were sure to see Hannah More and Lady Morgan (as Anne Scott had wickedly christened them) trotting from their pasture, to lay their noses over the paling, and, as Washington Irving says of the old white-haired hedger with the Parisian snuffbox, 'to have a pleasant crack wi' the laird.'[1]

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[1] Vol. v. pp. 7–10.

On this subject let us report an anecdote furnished by a correspondent of our own, whose accuracy we can depend on: "I myself was acquainted with

"There" at Chiefswood "my wife and I spent this summer and autumn of 1821; — the first of several seasons which will ever dwell on my memory as the happiest of my life. We were near enough Abbotsford to partake as often as we liked of its brilliant and constantly varying society; yet could do so

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a little Blenheim cocker, one of the smallest, beautifulest and wisest of lap-dogs or dogs, which, though Sir Walter knew it not, was very singular in its behavior towards him. *Shandy*, so hight this remarkable cocker, was extremely shy of strangers: promenading on Prince's Street, which in fine weather used to be crowded in those days, he seemed to live in perpetual fear of being stolen; if any one but looked at him admiringly, he would draw back with angry timidity, and crouch towards his own lady-mistress. One day a tall, irregular, busy-looking man came halting by; the little dog ran towards him, began fawning, frisking, licking at his feet: it was Sir Walter Scott! Had Shandy been the most extensive reader of Reviews, he could not have done better. Every time he saw Sir Walter afterwards, which was some three or four times in the course of visiting Edinburgh, he repeated his demonstrations, ran leaping, frisking, licking the Author of Waverley's feet. The good Sir Walter endured it with good-humor; looked down at the little wise face, at the silky shag-coat of snow-white and chestnut-brown; smiled, and avoided hitting him as they went on, — till a new division of streets or some other obstacle put an end to the interview. In fact he was a strange little fellow, this Shandy. He has been known to sit for hours looking out at the summer moon, with the saddest wistfulest expression of countenance; altogether like a Werterian Poet. He would have been a Poet, I dare say, if he could have found a *publisher*. But his moral tact was the most amazing. Without reason shown, without word spoken or act done, he took his likings and dislikings; unalterable; really almost unerring. His chief aversion, I should say, was to the genus *quack*, above all to the genus *acrid-quack;* these, though never so clear-starched, bland-smiling and beneficent, he absolutely would have no trade with. Their very sugar-cake was unavailing. He said with emphasis, as clearly as barking could say it: 'Acrid-quack, avaunt!' Would to Heaven many a prime-minister, and high person in authority, had such an invaluable talent! On the whole, there is more in this universe than our philosophy has dreamt of. A dog's instinct is a voice of Nature too; and farther, *it* has never babbled itself away in idle jargon and hypothesis, but always adhered to the practical, and grown in silence by continual communion with fact. We do the animals injustice. Their body resembles our body, Buffon says: with its four limbs, with its spinal marrow, main organs in the head and so forth: but have they not a kind of soul, equally the rude draught and imperfect imitation ot ours? It is a strange, an almost solemn and pathetic thing to see an intelligence imprisoned in that dumb rude form; struggling to express itself out of that; — even as we do out of our imprisonment; and succeed very imperfectly!"

without being exposed to the worry and exhaustion of spirit which the daily reception of new-comers entailed upon all the family, except Sir Walter himself. But, in truth, even he was not always proof against the annoyances connected with such a style of open housekeeping. Even his temper sank sometimes under the solemn applauses of learned dulness, the vapid raptures of painted and periwigged dowagers, the horse-leech avidity with which underbred foreigners urged their questions, and the pompous simpers of condescending magnates. When sore beset at home in this way, he would every now and then discover that he had some very particular business to attend to on an outlying part of his estate; and, craving the indulgence of his guests overnight, appear at the cabin in the glen before its inhabitants were astir in the morning. The clatter of Sibyl Grey's hoofs, the yelping of Mustard and Spice, and his own joyous shout of *réveillée* under our windows, were the signal that he had burst his toils, and meant for that day to "take his ease in his inn." On descending, he was to be found seated with all his dogs and ours about him, under a spreading ash that overshadowed half the bank between the cottage and the brook, pointing the edge of his woodman's-axe, and listening to Tom Purdie's lecture touching the plantation that most needed thinning. After breakfast he would take possession of a dressing-room up-stairs, and write a chapter of *The Pirate;* and then, having made up and despatched his packet for Mr. Ballantyne, away to join Purdie wherever the foresters were at work — and sometimes to labor among them as strenuously as John Swanston — until it was time either to rejoin his own party at Abbotsford, or the quiet circle of the cottage. When his guests were few and friendly, he often made them come over and meet him at Chiefswood in a body towards evening; and surely he never appeared to more amiable advantage than when helping his young people with their little arrangements upon such occasions. He was ready with all sorts of devices to supply the wants of a narrow establishment; he used to delight particularly in sinking the wine in a well under the *brae* ere he went out, and hauling up the basket just before dinner was announced, — this primitive device being, he said, what he had always practised when a young housekeeper, and in his opinion far superior in its results to any application of ice: and in the same spirit, whenever the weather was sufficiently genial, he voted for dining out of doors altogether, which at once got rid of the inconvenience of very small rooms, and made it natural and easy for the gentlemen to help the ladies, so that the paucity of servants went for nothing."[1]

Surely all this is very beautiful; like a picture of Boccaccio's: the ideal of a country life in our time. Why could it not last? Income was not wanting: Scott's official permanent income was amply adequate to meet the expense of all that was valuable in it; nay, of all that was not harassing, senseless and despicable. Scott had some £2,000 a year without writing books at all. Why should he manufacture and not create, to make more money; and rear mass on mass for a dwelling to himself, till the pile toppled, sank crashing, and buried him in its ruins, when he had a safe pleasant dwelling ready of its own accord? Alas, Scott, with all his health, was *infected;* sick of the fearfulest malady, that of Ambition! To such length had the King's baronetcy, the world's favor and "sixteen parties a day," brought it with him. So the inane racket must be kept up, and rise ever higher. So masons labor, ditchers delve; and there is endless, altogether deplorable correspondence about marble slabs for tables, wainscoting of rooms, curtains and the trimmings of curtains, orange-colored or fawn-colored: Walter Scott, one of the gifted of the world, whom his admirers call the most gifted, must kill himself that he may be a country gentleman, the founder of a race of Scottish lairds.

It is one of the strangest, most tragical histories ever enacted under this sun. So poor a passion can lead so strong a man into such mad extremes. Surely, were not man a fool always, one might say there was something eminently distracted in this, *end* as it would, of a Walter Scott writing daily with the ardor of a steam-engine, that he might make £15,000 a year, and buy upholstery with it. To cover the walls of a stone house in Selkirkshire with knick-knacks, ancient armor and genealogical shields, what can we name it but a being bit with delirium of a kind? That tract after tract of moorland in the shire of Selkirk should be joined together on parchment and by ring-fence, and named after one's name, — why, it is a shabby small-type edition of your vulgar Napoleons, Alexanders, and conquering heroes, not counted venerable by any teacher of men! —

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[1] Vol. v. pp. 123, 124.

"The whole world was not half so wide
To Alexander when he cried
Because he had but one to subdue,
As was a narrow paltry tub to
Diogenes; who ne'er was said,
For aught that ever I could read,
To whine, put finger i' the eye and sob,
Because he had ne'er another tub."

Not he! And if, "looked at from the Moon, which itself is far from Infinitude," Napoleon's dominions were as small as mine, *what*, by any chance of possibility, could Abbotsford landed-property ever have become? As the Arabs say, there is a black speck, were it no bigger than a bean's eye, in every soul; which, once set it a-working, will overcloud the whole man into darkness and quasi-madness, and hurry him balefully into Night!

With respect to the literary character of these Waverley Novels, so extraordinary in their commercial character, there remains, after so much reviewing, good and bad, little that it were profitable at present to say. The great fact about them is, that they were faster written and better paid for than any other books in the world. It must be granted, moreover, that they have a worth far surpassing what is usual in such cases; nay, that if Literature had no task but that of harmlessly amusing indolent languid men, here was the very perfection of Literature; that a man, here more emphatically than ever elsewhere, might fling himself back, exclaiming, "Be mine to lie on this sofa, and read everlasting Novels of Walter Scott!" The composition, slight as it often is, usually hangs together in some measure, and *is* a composition. There is a free flow of narrative, of incident and sentiment; an easy masterlike coherence throughout, as if it were the free dash of a master's hand, "round as the O of Giotto."[1] It is the perfection of extemporaneous writing. Farthermore, surely he were a blind critic who did not recognize here a certain genial sunshiny freshness and picturesqueness; paintings both of scenery and figures, very graceful, brilliant, occasionally full of grace and glowing brightness blended in the softest composure; in fact, a deep sincere love of the beautiful in Nature and Man, and the readiest faculty of expressing this by imagination and by word. No fresher paintings of Nature can be found than Scott's; hardly anywhere a wider sympathy with man. From Davie Deans up to Richard Cœur-de-Lion; from Meg Merrilies to Die Vernon and Queen Elizabeth! It is the utterance of a man of open soul; of a brave, large, free-seeing man, who has a true brotherhood with all men. In joyous picturesqueness and fellow-feeling, freedom of eye and heart; or to say it in a word, in general *healthiness* of mind, these Novels prove Scott to have been amongst the foremost writers.

Neither in the higher and highest excellence, of drawing character, is he at any time altogether deficient; though at no time can we call him, in the best sense, successful. His Baillie Jarvies, Dinmonts, Dalgettys (for their name is legion), do look and talk like what they give themselves out for; they are, if not *created* and made poetically alive, yet deceptively *enacted* as a good player might do them. What more is wanted, then? For the reader lying on a sofa, nothing more; yet for another sort of reader, much. It were a long chapter to unfold the difference in drawing a character between a Scott, and a Shakspeare, a Goethe. Yet it is a difference literally immense; they are of different species; the value of the one is not to be counted in the coin of the other. We might say in a short word, which means a long matter, that your Shakspeare fashions his characters from the heart outwards; your Scott fashions them from the skin inwards, never getting near the heart of them! The one set become living men and women; the other amount to little more than mechanical cases, deceptively painted automatons. Compare Fenella with Goethe's Mignon, which, it was once said, Scott had "done Goethe the honor" to borrow. He has borrowed what he could of Mignon. The small stature, the climbing talent, the trickiness, the *mechanical case*, as we say, he has borrowed; but the soul of Mignon is left behind. Fenella is an unfavorable specimen for Scott; but it illustrates in the aggravated state, what is traceable in all the characters he drew.

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[1] "Venne a Firenze" (il cortigiano del Papa), "e andato una mattina in bottega di Giotto, che lavorava, gli chiese un poco di disegno per mandarlo a sua Santità. Giotto, che garbatissimo era, prese un foglio, ed in quello con un pennello tinto di rosso, fermato il braccio al fianco per farne compasso, e girato la mano fece un tondo sì pari di sesto e di profilo, che fu a vederlo una maraviglia. Ciò fatto ghignando disse al cortigiano, Eccovi il disegno. . . . Onde il Papa, e molti cortigiani intendenti conobbero perciò, quanto Giotto avanzasse d' eccelenza tutti gli altri pittori del suo tempo. Divolgatasi poi questa cosa, ne nacque il proverbio, che ancora è in uso dirsi a gli uomini di grossa pasta: *Tu sei più tondo che l' O di Giotto.*"—Vasari, *Vite* (Roma, 1759), i. 46.

To the same purport indeed we are to say that these famed books are altogether addressed to the every-day mind; that for any other mind there is next to no nourishment in them. Opinions, emotions, principles, doubts, beliefs, beyond what the intelligent country gentleman can carry along with him, are not to be found. It is orderly, customary, it is prudent, decent; nothing more. One would say, it lay not in Scott to give much more; getting out of the ordinary range, and attempting the heroic, which is but seldom the case, he falls almost at once into the rose-pink sentimental, — descries the Minerva Press from afar, and hastily quits that course; for none better than he knew it to lead no-whither. On the whole, contrasting *Waverley*, which was carefully written, with most of its followers, which were written extempore, one may regret the extempore method. Something very perfect in its kind might have come from Scott; nor was it a low kind: nay, who knows how high, with studious self-concentration, he might have gone; what wealth Nature had implanted in him, which his circumstances, most unkind while seeming to be kindest, had never impelled him to unfold?

But after all, in the loudest blaring and trumpeting of popularity, it is ever to be held in mind, as a truth remaining true forever, that Literature *has* other aims than that of harmlessly amusing indolent languid men: or if Literature have them not, then Literature is a very poor affair; and something else must have them, and must accomplish them, with thanks or without thanks; the thankful or thankless world were not long a world otherwise! Under this head there is little to be sought or found in the Waverley Novels. Not profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for edification, for building up or elevating, in any shape! The sick heart will find no healing here, the darkly struggling heart no guidance: the Heroic that is in all men no divine awakening voice. We say, therefore, that they do not found themselves on deep interests, but on comparatively trivial ones; not on the perennial, perhaps not even on the lasting. In fact, much of the interest of these Novels results from what may be called contrasts of costume. The phraseology, fashion of arms, of dress and life, belonging to one age, is brought suddenly with singular vividness before the eyes of another. A great effect this; yet by the very nature of it, an altogether temporary one. Consider, brethren, shall not we too one day be antiques, and grow to have as quaint a costume as the rest? The stuffed Dandy, only give him *time*, will become one of the wonderfulest mummies. In antiquarian museums, only two centuries hence, the steeple-hat will hang on the next peg to Franks and Company's patent, antiquarians deciding which is uglier: and the Stulz swallow-tail, one may hope, will seem as incredible as any garment that ever made ridiculous the respectable back of man. Not by slashed breeches, steeple-hats, buff-belts, or antiquated speech, can romance-heroes continue to interest us; but simply and solely, in the long-run, by being men. Buff-belts and all manner of jerkins and costumes are transitory; man alone is perennial. He that has gone deeper into this than other men, will be remembered longer than they; he that has not, not. Tried under this category, Scott, with his clear practical insight, joyous temper, and other sound faculties, is not to be accounted little, — among the ordinary circulating-library heroes he might well pass for a demi-god. Not little; yet neither is he great; there were greater, more than one or two, in his own age: among the great of all ages, one sees no likelihood of a place for him.

What, then, is the result of these Waverley Romances? Are they to amuse one generation only? One or more! As many generations as they can; but not all generations: ah no, when our swallow-tail has become fantastic as trunk-hose, they will cease to amuse! — Meanwhile, as we can discern, their results have been several-fold. First of all, and certainly not least of all, have they not perhaps had this result: that a considerable portion of mankind has hereby been sated with mere amusement, and set on seeking something better? Amusement in the way of reading can go no farther, can do nothing better, by the power of man; and men ask, Is this what it can do? Scott, we reckon, carried several things to their ultimatum and crisis, so that change became inevitable: a great service, though an indirect one.

Secondly, however, we may say, these Historical Novels have taught all men this truth, which looks like a truism, and yet was as good as unknown to writers of history and others, till so taught: that the bygone ages of the world were actually filled by living men, not by protocols, state-papers, controversies and abstractions of men. Not abstractions were they, not diagrams and theorems; but men, in buff or other coats and breeches, with color in their cheeks, with passions in their stomach, and the idioms, features and vitalities of very men. It is a little word this; inclusive of great meaning! History will henceforth have to take thought of it. Her faint hearsays of "philosophy teaching by experience" will have to exchange themselves everywhere for direct inspection and embodiment: this, and this only, will be counted experience; and till once experience have got in, philosophy will reconcile herself to wait at the door. It is a great service, fertile in consequences, this that Scott has done; a great truth laid open by him; — correspondent indeed to the substantial nature of the man; to his solidity and veracity even of imagination, which, with all his lively discursiveness, was the characteristic of him.

A word here as to the extempore style of writing, which is getting much celebrated in these days. Scott seems to have been a high proficient in it. His rapidity was extreme; and the matter produced was excellent, considering that: the circumstances under which some of his Novels, when he could not himself write, were dictated, are justly considered wonderful. It is a valuable faculty this of ready-writing; nay farther, for Scott's purpose it was clearly the only good mode. By much labor he could not have added one guinea to his copyright; nor could the reader on the sofa have lain a whit more at ease. It was in all ways necessary that these works should be produced rapidly; and, round or not, be thrown off like Giotto's O. But indeed, in all things, writing or other, which a man engages in, there is the indispensablest beauty in knowing *how to get done.* A man frets himself to no purpose; he has not the sleight of the trade; he is not a craftsman, but an unfortunate borer and bungler, if he know not when to have done. Perfection is unattainable: no carpenter ever made a mathematically accurate right-angle, in the world; yet all carpenters know when it is right enough, and do not botch it, and lose their wages, by making it too right. Too much painstaking speaks disease in one's mind, as well as too little. The adroit sound-minded man will endeavor to spend on each business approximately what of pains it deserves; and with a conscience void of remorse will dismiss it then. All this in favor of easy-writing shall be granted, and, if need were, enforced and inculcated.

And yet, on the other hand, it shall not less but more strenuously be inculcated, that in the way of writing, no great thing was ever, or will ever be done with ease, but with difficulty! Let ready-writers with any faculty in them lay this to heart. Is it with ease, or not with ease, that a man shall *do his best,* in any shape; above all, in this shape justly named of "soul's travail," working in the deep places of thought, embodying the True out of the Obscure and Possible, environed on all sides with the uncreated False? Not so, now or at any time. The experience of all men belies it; the nature of things contradicts it. Virgil and Tacitus, were they ready-writers?

The whole *Prophecies of Isaiah* are not equal in extent to this cobweb of a Review Article. Shakspeare, we may fancy, wrote with rapidity; but not till he had thought with intensity: long and sore had this man thought, as the seeing eye may discern well, and had dwelt and wrestled amid dark pains and throes, — though his great soul is silent about all that. It was for him to write rapidly at fit intervals, being ready to do it. And herein truly lies the secret of the matter: such swiftness of mere writing, after due energy of preparation, is doubtless the right method; the hot furnace having long worked and simmered, let the pure gold flow out at one gush. It was Shakspeare's plan; no easy-writer he, or he had never been a Shakspeare. Neither was Milton one of the mob of gentlemen that write with ease; he did not attain Shakspeare's faculty, one perceives, of even writing fast *after* long preparation, but struggled while he wrote. Goethe also tells us he "had nothing sent him in his sleep;" no page of his but he knew well how it came there. It is reckoned to be the best prose, accordingly, that has been written by any modern. Schiller, as an unfortunate and unhealthy man, "*könnte nie fertig werden*, never could get done;" the noble genius of him struggled not wisely but too well, and wore his life itself heroically out. Or did Petrarch write easily? Dante sees himself "growing lean" over his *Divine Comedy;* in stern solitary death-wrestle with it, to prevail over it, and do it, if his uttermost faculty may: hence, too, it is done and prevailed over, and the fiery life of it endures forevermore among men.

No: creation, one would think, cannot be easy; your Jove has severe pains, and fire-flames, in the head out of which an armed Pallas is struggling! As for manufacture, that is a different matter, and may become easy or not easy, according as it is taken up. Yet of manufacture too, the general truth is that, given the manufacturer, it will be worthy in direct proportion to the pains bestowed upon it; and worthless always, or nearly so, with no pains. Cease, therefore, O ready-writer, to brag openly of thy rapidity and facility; to thee (if thou be in the manufacturing line) it is a benefit, an increase of wages; but to me it is sheer loss, worsening of my penny-worth: why wilt thou brag of it to me? Write easily, by steam if thou canst contrive it, and canst sell it; but hide it like virtue! "Easy writing," said Sheridan, "is sometimes d—d hard reading." Sometimes; and always it is sure to be rather useless reading, which indeed (to a creature of few years and much work) may be reckoned the hardest of all.

Scott's productive facility amazed everybody; and set Captain Hall, for one, upon a very strange method of accounting for it without miracle; — for which see his Journal, above quoted from. The Captain, on counting line for line, found that he himself had written in that Journal of his almost as much as Scott, at odd hours in a given number of days; "and as for the invention," says he, "it is known that this costs Scott nothing, but comes to him of its own accord." Convenient indeed! — But for us too Scott's rapidity is great, is a proof and consequence of the solid health of the man, bodily and spiritual; great, but unmiraculous; not greater than that of many others besides Captain Hall. Admire it, yet with measure. For observe always, there are two conditions in work: let me fix the quality, and *you* shall fix the quantity! Any man may get through work rapidly who easily satisfies himself about it. Print the *talk* of any man, there will be a thick octavo volume daily; make his writing three times as good as his talk, there will be the third part of a volume daily, which still is good work. To write with never such rapidity in a passable manner, is indicative not of a man's genius, but of his habits; it will prove his soundness of nervous system, his practicality of mind, and in fine, that he has the knack of his trade. In the most flattering view, rapidity will betoken health of mind: much also, perhaps most of all, will depend on health of body. Doubt it not, a faculty of easy-writing is attainable by man! The human genius, once fairly set in this direction, will carry it far. William Cobbett, one of the healthiest of men, was a greater improviser even than Walter Scott: his writing, considered as to quality and quantity, of Rural Rides, Registers, Grammars, Sermons, Peter Porcupines, Histories of Reformation, ever-fresh denouncements of Potatoes and Paper-money, seems to us still more wonderful. Pierre Bayle wrote enormous folios, one sees not on what motive-principle: he flowed on forever, a mighty tide of ditch-water; and even died flowing, with the pen in his hand. But indeed the most unaccountable ready-writer of all is, probably, the common Editor of a Daily Newspaper. Consider his leading articles; what they treat of, how passably they are done. Straw that has been thrashed a hundred times without wheat; ephemeral sound of a sound; such portent of the hour as all men have seen a hundred times turn out inane: how a man, with merely human faculty, buckles himself nightly with new vigor and interest to this thrashed straw, nightly thrashes it anew, nightly gets up new thunder about it; and so goes on thrashing and thundering for a considerable series of years; this is a fact remaining still to be accounted for, in human physiology. The vitality of man is great.

Or shall we say, Scott, among the many things he carried towards their ultimatum and crisis, carried this of ready-writing too, that so all men might better see what was in it? It is a valuable consummation. Not without results; — results, at some of which Scott as a Tory politician would have greatly shuddered. For if once Printing have grown to be as Talk, then DEMOCRACY (if we look into the roots of things) is not a bugbear and probability, but a certainty, and event as good as come! "Inevitable seems it me." But leaving this, sure enough the triumph of ready-writing appears to be even now; everywhere the ready-writer is found bragging strangely of his readiness. In a late translated *Don Carlos*, one of the most indifferent translations ever done with any sign of ability, a hitherto unknown individual is found assuring his reader, "The reader will possibly think it an excuse, when I assure him that the whole piece was completed within the space of ten weeks, that is to say, between the sixth of January and the eighteenth of March of this year (inclusive of a fortnight's interruption from over-exertion); that I often translated twenty pages a day, and that the fifth act was the work of five days."[1] O hitherto unknown individual, what is it to me what time it was the work of, whether five days or five decades of years? The only question is, How well hast thou done it?

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[1] *Don Carlos*, a Dramatic Poem, from the German of Schiller. Mannheim and London, 1837.

So, however, it stands: the genius of Extempore irresistibly lording it, advancing on us like ocean-tides, like Noah's deluges — of ditch-water! The prospect seems one of the lamentablest. To have all Literature swum away from us in watery Extempore, and a spiritual time of Noah supervene? That surely is an awful reflection; worthy of dyspeptic Matthew Bramble in a London fog! Be of comfort, O splenetic Matthew; it is not Literature they are swimming away; it is only Book-publishing and Book-selling. Was there not a Literature *before* Printing or Faust of Mentz, and yet men wrote extempore? Nay, before Writing or Cadmus of Thebes, and yet men spoke extempore? Literature is the Thought of thinking Souls; this, by the blessing of God, can in no generation be swum away, but remains with us to the end.

Scott's career, of writing impromptu novels to buy farms with, was not of a kind to terminate voluntarily, but to accelerate itself more and more; and one sees not to what wise goal it could, in any case, have led him. Bookseller Constable's bankruptcy was not the ruin of Scott; his ruin was, that ambition, and even false ambition, had laid hold of him; that his way of life was not wise. Whither could it lead? Where could it stop? New farms there remained ever to be bought, while new novels could pay for them. More and more success but gave more and more appetite, more and more audacity. The impromptu writing must have waxed ever thinner; declined faster and faster into the questionable category, into the condemnable, into the generally condemned. Already there existed, in secret, everywhere a considerable opposition party; witnesses of the Waverley miracles, but unable to believe in them, forced silently to protest against them. Such opposition party was in the sure case to grow; and even, with the impromptu process ever going on, ever waxing thinner, to draw the world over to it. Silent protest must at length have come to words; harsh truths, backed by harsher facts of a world-popularity overwrought and worn out, behooved to have been spoken; — such as can be spoken now without reluctance, when they can pain the brave man's heart no more. Who knows? Perhaps it was better ordered to be all *otherwise.* Otherwise, at any rate, it was. One day the Constable mountain, which seemed to stand strong like the other rock mountains, gave suddenly, as the icebergs do, a loud-sounding crack; suddenly, with huge clangor, shivered itself into ice-dust; and sank, carrying much along with it. In one day Scott's high-heaped money-wages became fairy-money and nonentity; in one day the rich man and lord of land saw himself penniless, landless, a bankrupt among creditors.

It was a hard trial. He met it proudly, bravely, — like a brave proud man of the world. Perhaps there had been a prouder way still: to have owned honestly that he *was* unsuccessful, then, all bankrupt, broken, in the world's goods and repute; and to have turned else-whither for some refuge. Refuge did lie elsewhere; but it was not Scott's course, or fashion of mind, to seek it there. To say, Hitherto I have been all in the wrong, and this my fame and pride, now broken, was an empty delusion and spell of accursed witchcraft! It was difficult for flesh and blood! He said, I will retrieve myself, and make my point good yet, or die for it. Silently, like a proud strong man, he girt himself to the Hercules' task, of removing rubbish-mountains, since that was it; of paying large ransoms by what he could still write and sell. In his declining years, too; misfortune is doubly and trebly unfortunate that befalls us then. Scott fell to his Hercules' task like a very man, and went on with it unweariedly; with a noble cheerfulness, while his life-strings were cracking, he grappled with it, and wrestled with it, years long, in death-grips, strength to strength; — and *it* proved the stronger; and his life and heart did crack and break: the cordage of a most strong heart! Over these last writings of Scott, his *Napoleons, Demonologies, Scotch Histories,* and the rest, criticism, finding still much to wonder at, much to commend, will utter no word of blame; this one word only, Woe is me! The noble war-horse that once laughed at the shaking of the spear, how is he doomed to toil himself dead, dragging ignoble wheels! Scott's descent was like that of a spent projectile; rapid, straight down; — perhaps mercifully so. It is a tragedy, as all life is; one proof more that Fortune stands on a restless *globe;* that Ambition, literary, warlike, politic, pecuniary, never yet profited any man.

Our last extract shall be from Volume Sixth; a very tragical one. Tragical, yet still beautiful; waste Ruin's havoc borrowing a kind of sacredness from a yet sterner visitation, that of Death! Scott has withdrawn into a solitary lodging-house in Edinburgh, to do daily the day's work there; and had to leave his wife at Abbotsford in the last stage of disease. He went away silently; looked silently at the sleeping face he scarcely hoped ever to see again. We quote from a Diary he had begun to keep in those months, on hint from Byron's *Ravenna Journal:* copious sections of it render this Sixth Volume more interesting than any of the former ones: —

"*Abbotsford, May* 11 (1826). — . . . It withers my heart to think of it, and to recollect that I can hardly hope again to seek confidence and counsel from that ear, to which all might be safely confided. But in her present lethargic state, what would my attendance have availed? — and Anne has promised close and constant intelligence. I must dine with James Ballantyne today *en famille.* I cannot help it; but would rather be at home and alone. However, I can go out too. I will not yield to the barren sense of hopelessness which struggles to invade me.

"*Edinburgh, — Mrs. Brown's lodgings, North St. David Street — May* 12. — I passed a pleasant day with kind J. B., which was a great relief from the black dog, which would have worried me at home. He was quite alone.

"Well, here I am in Arden. And I may say with Touchstone, 'When I was at home I was in a better place;' I must, when there is occasion, draw to my own Baillie Nicol Jarvie's consolation — 'One cannot carry the comforts of the Saut-Market about with one.' Were I at ease in mind, I think the body is very well cared for. Only one other lodger in the house, a Mr. Shandy, — a clergyman, and, despite his name, said to be a quiet one."

"*May* 14. — A fair good-morrow to you, Mr. Sun, who are shining so brightly on these dull walls. Methinks you look as if you were looking as bright on the banks of the Tweed; but look where you will, Sir Sun, you look upon sorrow and suffering. — Hogg was here yesterday, in danger, from having obtained an accommodation of £100 from James Ballantyne, which he is now obliged to repay. I am unable to help the poor fellow, being obliged to borrow myself."

"*May* 15. — Received the melancholy intelligence that all is over at Abbotsford."

"*Abbotsford, May* 16. — She died at nine in the morning, after being very ill for two days — easy at last. I arrived here late last night. Anne is worn out, and has had hysterics, which returned on my arrival. Her broken accents were like those of a child, the language as well as the tones broken, but in the most gentle voice of submission. 'Poor mamma — never return again — gone forever — a better place.' Then, when she came to herself, she spoke with sense, freedom and strength of mind, till her weakness returned. It would have been inexpressibly moving to me as a stranger — what was it then to the father and the husband? For myself, I scarce know how I feel; sometimes as firm as the Bass Rock, sometimes as weak as the water that breaks on it. I am as alert at thinking and deciding as I ever was in my life. Yet, when I contrast what this place now is, with what it has been not long since, I think my heart will break. Lonely, aged, deprived of my family — all but poor Anne; an impoverished and embarrassed man, deprived of the sharer of my thoughts and counsels, who could always talk down my sense of the calamitous apprehensions which break the heart that must bear them alone. — Even her foibles were of service to me, by giving me things to think of beyond my weary self-reflections.

"I have seen her. The figure I beheld is, and is not my Charlotte — my thirty-years companion. There is the same symmetry of form, though those limbs are rigid which were once so gracefully elastic — but that yellow mask, with pinched features, which seems to mock life rather than emulate it, can it be the face that was once so full of lively expression? I will not look on it again. Anne thinks her little changed, because the latest idea she had formed of her mother is as she appeared under circumstances of extreme pain. Mine go back to a period of comparative ease. If I write long in this way, I shall write down my resolution, which I should rather write up, if I could."

"*May* 18. — . . . Cerements of lead and of wood already hold her; cold earth must have her soon. But it is not my Charlotte, it is not the bride of my youth, the mother of my children, that will be laid among the ruins of Dryburgh, which we have so often visited in gayety and pastime. No, no."

"*May* 22. — . . . Well, I am not apt to shrink from that which is my duty, merely because it is painful; but I wish this funeral-day over. A kind of cloud of stupidity hangs about me, as if all were unreal that men seem to be doing and talking."

"*May* 26. — . . . Were an enemy coming upon my house, would I not do my best to fight, although oppressed in spirits; and shall a similar despondency prevent me from mental exertion? It shall not, by Heaven!"

"*Edinburgh, May* 30. — Returned to town last night with Charles. This morning resume ordinary habits of rising early, working in the morning, and attending the Court. . . . I finished correcting the proofs for the Quarterly; it is but a flimsy article, but then the circumstances were most untoward. — This has been a melancholy day — most melancholy. I am afraid poor Charles found me weeping. I do not know what other folks feel, but with me the hysterical passion that impels tears is a terrible violence — a sort of throttling sensation — then succeeded by a state of dreaming stupidity, in which I ask if my poor Charlotte can actually be dead."[1]

This is beautiful as well as tragical. Other scenes, in that Seventh Volume, must come, which will have no beauty, but be tragical only. It is better that we are to end here.

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[1] Vol. vi pp. 297–307.

And so the curtain falls; and the strong Walter Scott is with us no more. A possession from him does remain; widely scattered; yet attainable; not inconsiderable. It can be said of him, When he departed, he took a Man's life along with him. No sounder piece of British manhood was put together in that eighteenth century of Time. Alas, his fine Scotch face, with its shaggy honesty, sagacity and goodness, when we saw it latterly on the Edinburgh streets, was all worn with care, the joy all fled from it; — ploughed deep with labor and sorrow. We shall never forget it; we shall never see it again. Adieu, Sir Walter, pride of all Scotchmen, take our proud and sad farewell.

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